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**The contentious politics of childhood and migration:
Grassroots mobilisations in support of 'non-status' children
in England and France**

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Finally, I would like to dedicate this thesis to 'non-status' migrants who have to fight their way through often unwelcoming situations. I hope that I have been able to document the concerns and issues that matter to both migrants and campaigners, and that this thesis might ultimately further their cause.

Declaration

I declare that this thesis is all my own work. It contains no material that has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma at any university. Some of the work contained in this thesis has been discussed in the following publications:

The Contentious Politics of Childhood and Asylum: collective action against foreign minors' removals in France and Britain, in Chabanet D. and F. Royall *Mobilising Against Marginalisation in Europe*, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 25-53, 2010

'The politics of childhood and asylum in the UK', *Children and Society*, 21(4), 249-260, 2007

'Asylum and Childhood in the UK: a highly political relationship', *RSC Working Paper No 34*, 2006

Abstract

This thesis examines grassroots mobilisations in France and England in support of children and families with no right to remain on the territory. It aims to provide a better understanding of the influence of 'childhood' as a social concept and 'the child' as a social actor on social mobilisations in support of 'non-status' children. It also intends to analyse the impact of national contexts on mobilisations.

The study is comparative in scope and relies on the analysis of 1,272 claims made in newspapers and 65 interviews with grassroots campaigners. The thesis first maps the field of contention as it applies to 'non-status' children. It then goes on to investigate actors' pathways into campaigning and their reasons for getting involved and sustaining involvement. It finally considers actors' conscious work to attract and mobilise bystanders.

This thesis shows that the presence of children considerably affected campaigning activities. First, children played an important role as key recruiting agents and influential collective actors. Second, childhood as a concept constituted a powerful mobilising factor, and campaigners strategically used the image of the child as innocent and vulnerable when making claims.

Overall, mobilisations in support of 'non-status' children and families in France and England presented many similarities, including their strong emotional component and the central role of schools. However, national contexts also played a role in enabling or constraining mobilisations. I identify both structural and discursive differences between the French and English contexts which considerably affected campaigns. In particular, structural differences in the implementation of migration policies had a noticeable effect on campaigners' perceived ability to exert change. Furthermore, mobilisations in France grew into a national network able and willing to make political claims. By contrast, mobilisations in England remained isolated and rarely adopted a political stance, focusing instead on the individual child or family.

List of Acronyms

BASW	British Association of Social Workers
CYP	Children and Young People
ECM	Every Child Matters
FCPE	Fédération des Conseils de Parents d'Elèves
GISTI	Groupe d'Information et de Soutien aux Travailleurs Immigrés
ILR	Indefinite Leave to Remain
IRR	Institute of Race Relations
LEA	Local Education Authority
MERCI	Mobilization on Ethnic Relations, Citizenship and Immigration
MP	Member of Parliament
NCADC	National Coalition of Anti-Deportation Campaigns
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NUT	National Union of Teachers
RCC	Refugee Children's Consortium
RESF	Réseau Education Sans Frontières
UMP	Union pour un Mouvement Populaire

Chapter One: Introduction

Irregular migration has attracted considerable political and public attention across developed countries. Since the late 1990s, combating irregular migration has become a central part of the European Union's (EU) common immigration policy and of individual EU countries. In this context, European states have adopted measures to reduce the numbers of people entering EU member states and increase returns of migrants staying irregularly on the territory. Children and child welfare have attracted a similar amount of political and public attention. The universal ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) alongside national policies to improve child welfare and secure children's access to education, demonstrate states' concerns for children and young people.

Whether accompanying their family or arriving in the country separated from their parents, migrant children under eighteen have represented a challenge to liberal-democratic states' recent attempts to restrict and securitise migration. 'Non-status' children, that is, children with no right to remain on the territory, elicit a stark tension between states' commitments to protecting children and to limiting 'unwanted' migration. As a result, children and young people have featured prominently, and often controversially, in numerous policy debates on asylum and migration in European countries. However, studies on their role as social movement actors or as objects of contention remain scarce within childhood studies, migration and social

movement studies. On the one hand, migrant children's needs have been widely investigated by education and social work researchers. On the other hand, when considering pro-migrant mobilisations, migration and social movement scholars have consistently focused on adult migrants. In some cases, expressions of support for asylum seekers' and 'sans papiers' children and families were perceived by scholars as marking the (re-)emergence of a wider movement of resistance against restrictive migration and asylum policies (Hintjens, 2006; Nyers, 2006). However, from my previous involvement with migrants, I noticed, on an anecdotal level, that the presence of or focus on children significantly affected the dynamics of mobilisations. Little research has focused specifically on the extent to which such focus might influence recruitment into and patterns of mobilisation, as well as movement claims and practices.

Aiming to fill this gap, this thesis investigates social mobilisations on behalf of families and young people threatened with removal in France and England. It focuses on grassroots mobilisations in support of children, families and young people liable to removal in France and England between 2000 and 2009. As argued by Meyer (2004), the study of social movements and collective action has much to benefit from explicit comparisons across different contexts. England and France, two old nations, are two culturally and geographically close Western European liberal democracies, with comparable national political traditions and colonial involvements (Favell, 2001). More specifically, both France and England have a long migration tradition largely shaped by their colonial past. Despite such similarities, both countries show interesting differences likely to enrich the analysis. First,

despite increasing similarities in debates around immigration and integration, each country's specific model of integration still retains strength as a framework of reference in which debates take place and policy evolves (Favell, 2001; Koopmans et al., 2005). More generally, the frames of political action and justification remain intrinsically different. In France, the Constitution and the universalist principles it enshrines – Liberty, Equality, Fraternity – play a central role in delineating French citizen's '*Weltanschauung*'. In England, by contrast, community-based solutions to minority issues have long prevailed and were largely influenced by the short-term pragmatism characteristic of its political tradition (Weil and Crowley, 1994). Another difference relates to the level at which administrative decisions on migrants' right to remain are being taken. In England, the Home Office is the sole decision-maker on the issue, while in France such decisions are being taken at the level of the *préfecture*¹ in each French department. These differences between France and England make comparison particularly interesting.

The object of my analysis can be defined as 'moral' or 'altruistic' activism to the extent that the actors under consideration mobilise to defend goods or situations that will not benefit them in the first place (Giugni and Passy, 2001). They are fighting to prevent the removal of other actors – children, young people or families with no right to remain on the territory. The thesis aims to consider the extent to which children might be 'used' for

¹ A 'Préfecture' in France is an administrative unit coming under the remit of the Ministry of the Interior. The Prefect represents the national government at the local level. With regard to immigration matters, a Prefecture is in charge of deciding upon the delivery of residency and work permits for foreigners living in the local area

strategic purposes in a context of declining support for adult migrants – representing a ‘strategic’ altruism – or, on the contrary, whether actors might be concerned with children only – thus representing a form of ‘bounded’ altruism (Selznick, 1995).

This research situates itself at the intersection of several fields of study and the approach is therefore multidisciplinary in scope. The study of refugees and migrants, as well as that of children, does not fit neatly into one single discipline. Similarly, the study of social movements is by no means just a subfield of sociology. As argued by Klandermans and Staggenborg (2002), cross-fertilisation of sociological research with work from political science and other disciplines is precisely one of the reasons for its ‘stunning growth’. Broadly, this research builds upon and aims to contribute to the fields of sociology and political science. It seeks to address the gap in research on social movement and political altruism as related to ‘non-status’ children. The following chapter examines previous studies relating to my research and identifies some of the gaps which my thesis aims to fill.

The methodological framework designed for the purpose of this investigation reflects the originality of the object of study. Since mobilisations in support of ‘non-status’ children in France and England have never been studied previously, it was necessary to start the investigation with an exploratory study that would help me map the field of contention in both countries. The quantitative political claims-making analysis (see Chapter 3 and 4) had such a ‘development’ function (Greene et al., 1989), and contributed to developing and informing the qualitative method, which principally relied on in-depth semi-structured interviews. Between December

2007 and June 2009, over 1,200 claims were analysed in the Guardian and Le Monde for the purpose of the political claims-making analysis, and over 65 interviews were carried out with campaigners supporting 'non-status' families and young people in England and France. A decision was made to opt for a multi-locational approach in both France and England, with interviews being carried out in the capital city and its surroundings – respectively Paris and London – and in another large city and its surroundings – respectively Lyon and Manchester. This additional regional focus enabled me to control for specificities proper to each country's capital cities.

For the purpose of interviews, the emphasis was on the accounts of 'non-status' children's supporters, both adults and young people over the age of sixteen. No child under the age of sixteen was formally interviewed for the purpose of this research, and, as a result, this study does not directly focus on children's action and opinions as social actors. From the outset, this study aimed first and foremost to uncover the extent to which conceptualisations of childhood within 'adult' society affected actors' decision to mobilise and/or framing activities. However, an interesting outcome of this analysis was to identify the specificities brought about by young peoples' actions and opinions as social and political actors, which are considered in Chapter 8. Furthermore, I made sure to interview 'non-status' young people and families to control for supporters' accounts, even though the focus was on altruistic mobilisations. In addition, I was myself strongly involved with 'non-status' adults and families in France and England during the course of this research and was able to contrast my results and research experiences with the reality of the 'non-status' migrants I had befriended. Overall, the study aims to

investigate who mobilises in support of 'non-status' children and families, in what context, for what reasons, and with what strategies. In particular, this thesis aims to answer a set of three complementary research questions set out below:

- **How does the 'child variable' influence mobilisations, in terms of the actors involved, their reasons for involvement, and their framing activities?**

In this thesis, I am analysing the incidence of the 'child variable' on mobilisations at the time of recruitment, in terms of personal motivations and in the strategic mobilisation of ideas and actions. My goal is to understand how 'childhood' as a social concept and 'the child' as a social actor affect campaigning activities. In particular, it aims to investigate to what extent different conceptualisations of the child interfere in the process of campaigning.

- **How do national contexts affect campaigning activities?**

The comparative approach enables me to question the influence of the national context, in particular institutional and discursive opportunities or constraints, on grassroots mobilisations (Koopmans et al., 2005; Meyer, 2004). Indeed, research has shown that mobilisations are commonly shaped by the specific socio-cultural and political contexts in which they are situated. The comparative aspect thus provides the opportunity to grasp the similarities and differences that might be related to the wider context in which they are situated. The limitation to two countries allows for an in-depth study

of movement patterns, as explained in Chapter 3, and shall help me expand beyond the limits of single-movement studies.

- **To what type of ‘social movement’ do these mobilisations belong?**

It is hoped that this investigation will ultimately shed light on the nature of the grassroots mobilisations under study and of the wider movements in which they are situated. In particular, based on the survey of the literature (Chapter 2), I discuss the extent to which mobilisations actually mark the (re-)emergence of a wider movement of resistance against restrictive migration policies or, rather, might constitute ephemeral ‘new emotional movements’ (Walgrave and Verhulst, 2006). Based on the commonalities and differences identified between mobilisations as they take place in France and England, I hope to be able to make conjectures about such locally anchored mobilisations with a strong moral component.

Structure of the thesis

This thesis is structured around nine chapters. Following the introduction, the first two describe the framework in which my research is situated. *Chapter 2* first describes the theoretical framework which is used for the purpose of this research. It then provides an overview of the literature on child-centred and pro-migrant mobilisations, and the wider contexts in which these mobilisations are embedded in both France and Britain. It then reviews the policy context as it more specifically applies to ‘non-status’ children in both

countries. The emergent literature on this large group of children is discussed in light of the research questions leading my investigation.

Chapter 3 describes the methods used for data collection and analysis. I draw on a multi-methods strategy to maximise the breadth of my results. The overall qualitative dimension of my research manages, however, to preserve the rich nuances and depth of study. I finally consider ethical issues as they apply to my research.

In *Chapter 4*, the political claims analysis, as devised by Koopmans and Statham (Koopmans and Statham, 1999), enables me to map the field of contention, as it relates to ‘non-status’ children and young people in France and Britain. By analysing both the collective actors involved and their main claims, I manage to reach preliminary conclusions that constitute the basis for my qualitative investigation.

Chapter 5 thus sets out to analyse movement actors at the local level, the micro-contexts of mobilisation and their pathways into grassroots campaigning against child deportations. It focuses, as long advocated by resource mobilisation theorists (McCarthy and Zald, 1977) and political process theorists (McAdam, 1999; Tilly, 1978), on mobilising structures, that is, micromobilisation contexts, informal networks, and social movement organisations, and their role in facilitating and structuring mobilisations.

This is followed by an analysis of participants’ reasons for involvement in *Chapter 6*. I investigate interviewees’ complex set of reasons for mobilising, and explore how the prevalent and possibly conflicting²

² These might be considered as conflicting to the extent that the common discourse often emphasised the need for comprehensive and inclusive policies targeting children, while the trend in Western

conceptions of childhood and (irregular) migration are appropriated and developed by campaigners. When considering the arguments brought forward by supporters to justify their involvement, I pay particular attention to cross-national differences, in an attempt to identify the impact of the socio-political context on people's individual reasons for involvement.

In *Chapter 7*, I then go on to analyse participants' reasons to sustain involvement, which remarkably differ from their reasons to mobilise. This chapter furthermore emphasises the daily aspects of campaigners' involvement, from interactions with state actors to friendships with 'non-status' families. This chapter points to the impact of the broader political system in constraining or facilitating involvement. Participants' entry points to decision-makers strongly affect their perceptions of success and conditions their motivation to sustain involvement.

Chapter 8 investigates another crucial aspect of movement activities: campaigners' strategic devices to attract media and public support. This chapter relies on the framing literature to identify campaigners' conscious work to align their practices and arguments to ensure they resonate with the political, cultural and emotional context prevalent in each country. Once more, I make use of the sociology of childhood to understand both actors' strategies and children's activities as social movement actors.

Finally, in *Chapter 9*, I draw upon and discuss the results of this research according to the three main research questions providing the frame for this research project.

countries consists in further excluding 'unwanted migrants' - low-skilled and irregular migrants as well as asylum-seekers.

Definition of terms

Finally, I need to explain some of the terminology used in this thesis.

Child: The question of how to name and categorise a groups as diverse and with such a large span as the 0 to 18 years old has been tackled by numerous researchers without a clear answer. In France, in particular, researchers and journalists alike are very reluctant to describe young people from the age of 13 as children (*enfants*) and prefer instead using terms such as teenagers (*adolescent*) or young people (*les jeunes*). As argued by Fawcett (2004: 3), 'the term child is neither appropriate nor accurate in many instances ... However, for the sake of brevity the term 'child' and 'children' are those most commonly used'. This will also be the case for this thesis. For the sake of brevity, I will follow the United Nations definition of a 'child', which covers all people aged 0 to 18, to describe 'children and young people', even though I acknowledge that it fails to represent the diversity of children and young people's lives.

Non-status: In this thesis, I draw on Nyers' (2003) expression of 'non-status' migrants to characterise a group – individuals who have no right to remain in the host country – that is referred to in very different terms in public debates depending on the country. In France, debates revolve around irregular migrants, the so-called '*sans-papiers*' (see Chapter 2 for a discussion of this term), as a group in its own right. In Britain however the concept of '*sans*

papiers' does not bear such resonance (Alldred, 2003). There, the issue of irregular migration has become of greater concern in recent years. However, policy debates revolve mainly around asylum-seekers as a category, including those whose claim has failed and who are, therefore, in an irregular situation. Despite nominal differences, the social and administrative situation of these people is almost identical. Their status is insecure since they have no long-term prospects in the host country, either because a decision must be made upon their or their parents' asylum application, or because they or their parents entered or remain in the country irregularly, thus being liable to removal. They share a common sociological identity, marked by their isolation and social 'invisibility' (Nyers, 2006), the precariousness of their living conditions and a strong feeling of social and physical insecurity (Desrues, 2006).

Removal/deportation: In England, the term 'removal' is used to describe the act of sending back a person to his/her country of origin if they do not have the permission to stay in the UK. The term 'deportation'³ is used to describe the act of sending back a person who has committed a crime while being in the UK. However, individuals can be considered as criminals if possessing forged documents. Thus, families can be either 'deported' or 'removed', depending on their immigration status and criminal record. Both terms will be used interchangeably.

³ The term 'deportation' thus does not bear the same historic and symbolic connotation as in French, where 'déportation' is used to describe the act of sending Jews to concentration and extermination camps, while 'expulsion' describes the act of sending an irregular migrant back to his/her country of origin.

Chapter Two: Theory and literature review

What is the potential for collective action in support of 'non-status' children? This chapter reviews different strands of the academic literature that, once synthesised, might provide a preliminary answer to this question. The chapter commences by outlining the theoretical framework for my analysis, based upon relevant theories of social problems and social movement. I then review the literature on child-centred mobilisations and pro-migrant mobilisations in France and Britain, which cannot be disconnected from the political context in which they are embedded. Child policies on the one hand, and migration and asylum policies on the other, have been characterised by widely differing evolutions. The child policy framework has been characterised by its 'inclusiveness', and has revolved around two central pillars, compulsory education and comprehensive child welfare. By contrast, the migration policy framework has been characterised by its increasingly exclusive measures towards 'unwanted' migrants (Joppke, 1998). This review of the literature enables me to obtain a rich picture of the contexts in which such mobilisations have been embedded, and to document the actors involved and the main frames of argumentation. In the final section I describe the policy framework as it applies to 'non-status' children in France and Britain, and the small amount of literature that has emerged to document how civil-society actors and 'frontline workers' have reacted to this field of tension.

This enables me to lay the foundation for my subsequent enquiry and analysis of collective action in support of ‘non-status’ children.

2.1 Theoretical framework: synthesising social movement theories

In the following section, I consider the theories that have influenced my investigation and analysis. While this thesis was principally informed by social movement theories, the approach advocated by social constructionist theorists also contributed to refine my analysis.

Social constructionism and social problems

When studying social movement and campaigning in support of ‘non-status’ children, one has to be aware of the high degree of constructedness surrounding contemporary understanding of ‘irregular migrants’ and childhood (James and Prout, 1997). Although there are specific biologic features that allow us to differentiate between different stages of life, it is now widely acknowledged that childhood is to a great extent a ‘social construction’, as convincingly argued by Ariès in his influential study on childhood during the Ancien Régime in France (1960). Similarly, it has been acknowledged that situations of irregularity fluctuate according to laws and

administrative practices, and that state definitions of illegality might be deliberately overlooked by some actors⁴.

Taking a social constructionist approach within this study shall enable us to 'account for the *emergence and maintenance of claim-making and responding activities*' (Spector and Kitsuse, 1973: 415) (emphasis in original), that is, the process by which a society comes to 'see, define and handle their social problems' (Blumer, 1971: 301). Social problems are a social construction to the extent that depending on the socio-economic, political and cultural context, some aspects of daily life will be more likely to shock or be of concern to some parts of the population, while others will remain unnoticed (Fritz and Altheide, 1987; Spector and Kitsuse, 1977). We will see that this is particularly true with regard to participants' reasons for involvement and definitions of the problems at stake (Chapter 6).

Also, the review of the literature precisely demonstrates how policies on children and migrants often represent responses to public concerns. In particular, policy changes often followed instances of social mobilisations or intense media debates (Goode and Ben-Yehuda, 1994). Theories of social movements define more precisely what sets of factors contribute to the emergence of such mobilisations, which I now turn to.

⁴ It has been shown that in France, after World War II, many migrants were brought over directly by employers without authorisation and were regularised a posteriori (82% of migrants applying for regularisation were regularised in 1968 (de Rudder, 2001; Wihol de Wenden, 1994b). At the time, migrants' situation of irregularity did not constitute a real problem for the State (Viet, 1998).

Theories of social movement: toward a synthetic perspective

There is no agreed definition of what a social movement is (Giugni et al., 1999; Wieviorka, 2005). Over many years, theoretical conflicts split the field of social movement research, with the school of 'contentious politics' on the one side (Oberschall, 1973; Tilly, 1978) and the New Social Movement theorists on the other (Touraine, 1968, 1978). The first school, composed principally of American sociologists and political scientists, advocated for focusing on structures and resources. Touraine's school of thought, by contrast, focused considerably more on actors as *Subjects* and their agency, viewing them in particular as directly moved by the desire to take control of historicity, that is, to exert social change (Jasper, 2004; Touraine, 1978).

In recent years, however, these theoretical conflicts have lost ground in the light of each tradition's substantial limitation in explaining social and solidarity movements. In their place, a more integrated approach to social movements has arisen (McAdam et al., 1996b; Passy, 2001a). As argued by Koopmans and Statham (1999: 203), 'the desirability of combining political opportunities (contextual factors), mobilising structures (organisational resources), and framing processes (discursive resources) has become an accepted tenet', in particular since the publication of an authoritative edited book synthesising and combining the three main theories on social movement (McAdam et al., 1996a).

According to the theory of political opportunity structures (POS), movements are shaped by the broader set of political constraints and opportunities unique to the national context in which they are embedded (McAdam, 1999; Tilly, 1978). A new strand of research on social movement

has shown that mobilisations are 'facilitated or constrained not only by general POS in which they are embedded but also by virtue of a 'set' of opportunities specific to the issue field in question' (Royall, 2007: 289). It is therefore important to specify the institutional and discursive opportunities relevant for each particular field of political contention (Koopmans and Statham, 2000b). This refined theory is particularly relevant to my analysis, as social mobilisations in support of 'non-status' children are situated at the intersection of highly dichotomous policy fields: child welfare and education, on the one hand, and asylum/immigration, on the other. Claims-makers can therefore be confronted with opportunities and constraints arising from institutional approaches to both migration and child welfare, informed on the one side by the figure of the 'ideal' child in need of protection and, on the other, by the figure of the 'unwanted' migrant undeserving of support. This theoretical approach lies at the heart of this thesis and pervades all the following chapters.

If the political context has an important influence on social movements, mobilising structures are also critical to understanding how social movements manage to organise. Mobilising structures can be defined as 'collective vehicles, informal as well as formal, through which people mobilise and engage in collective action' (McAdam et al., 1996b: 3). This implies looking into mobilisation processes (McCarthy and Zald, 1977), pre-existing networks (Diani and McAdam, 2003) and settings in which mobilisations take place (McAdam, 1988). Chapter 5 highlights the useful analytical tools provided by such an approach.

A different perspective on social movements is provided by the theory of framing processes (Benford and Snow, 2000; Snow et al., 1986), inspired by Goffman (1974). According to this theory, actors of social movements are viewed as agents actively engaged in the production and maintenance of meaning for constituents, antagonists, bystanders and observers (Benford, 1997; Benford and Snow, 2000). In this context, frames of collective action are to be understood as 'action-oriented sets of beliefs that inspire and legitimate the activities and campaigns of a social movement organization' (Cefai and Trom, 2002: 28). Actors will frame their claims and practices in order for them to resonate with the political and cultural context in which claims-makers are embedded. Chapters 4 and 8 apply this approach to the analysis of movement claims and practices.

Another aspect that has attracted social movement scholars' attention relates to the 'repertoires of justification' used by actors to make sense of their actions (Boltanski and Thévenot, 1991; Moran-Ellis et al., 2006). This field of research looks into 'critical moments' (Boltanski and Thévenot, 1999), which can be equated with what McAdam dubs 'cognitive liberation' (1999), whereby actors suddenly become inclined to dispute a course of events that they do not agree with. This describes the process of individual participation in social mobilisations. This fits more largely into a wider field of research interested in explaining the reasons for actors' involvement into activism (Collovald, 2002; Havard-Duclos and Nicourd, 2005; Ion, 1997; Sawicki and Siméant, 2009). The question of why people get involved is most particularly adapted to the study of 'altruistic' mobilisations, which calls into question, as discussed in the introduction, the political and social phenomena that bring

people to fight for a cause that will not directly benefit them (Giugni and Passy, 2001; Passy, 1997; Siméant, 1998). Such activists have also been described as 'moral' or 'conscience' constituents (McCarthy and Zald, 1977) or 'moral activists' (Agrikoliansky, 2001; Reynaud, 1980). Chapters 6 and 7 look into 'critical moments' for interviewees, and analyse how individual campaigners make sense of their recruitment into activism and sustained involvement.

Finally, scholars have advocated for paying greater attention to emotions within social movement research (Aminzade and McAdam, 2001; Flam and King, 2005; Goodwin et al., 2001b; Jasper, 1998; Traïni, 2008, 2009, 2010). Authors have acknowledge the important role played by emotions at different stages of the mobilisation process: in recruiting actors through 'moral shock' (Jasper, 1998; Jasper and Poulsen, 1995), as a strategy (Whittier, 2001) or as a cause for disengagement (Barker et al., 2008). As part of the increased focus on emotions, Walgrave and Verhulst (2006) developed a new concept to describe a form of mass-mobilisation, that of 'new emotional movements'. Such 'pain and loss mobilisations' (Jennings, 1999) are said to take place in reaction to random, non-war and non-political acts of violence resulting in the death or suffering of innocent people, such as the White Marches in reaction to the rapes and murders by Marc Dutroux of young girls in Belgium in the 1990s or the Snowdrop Campaign in reaction to the Dunblane killings in Scotland (Scott et al., 1998). Walgrave and Verhulst (2006: 281) show that victimisation and emotions play a central role in the mobilisation and development of the movements. Such mobilisations centred on the child as victim are generally characterised by

mass public support, organisational weakness, a broad elite support and extensive and positive media support. I show in Chapters 4, 6 and 8 that this approach is particularly useful when analysing social mobilisations in support of families threatened with deportation.

Both the literature review and my analysis emphasise the importance of taking into account each of these theories at different stages of the mobilisation process to obtain a rich and nuanced picture of movement emergence, sustenance and policy impact.

I will now turn to the literature pertaining to child-centred mobilisations.

2.2 Child-centred campaigns and mobilisations

As discussed when introducing the theoretical framework, three main factors can explain the emergence and success of child-centred campaigns. First, the context appears as a critical factor in securing openness towards these claims. Second, the function and role of child advocates, that is, the resources and opportunities they bring to the campaigns, seem to play a considerable role. Finally, the framing of the campaigns largely conditions their outcome.

Images of the child

The child has consistently stood at the centre of most societies' concerns for the past 100 years (Martin, 2004). As argued by James and Prout (1997: 1),

'the ideology of the child-centred society gives 'the child' and 'the interests of the child' a prominent place in the policy and practices of legal, welfare, medical and educational institutions'. The literature stresses, however, the crucial importance of understanding the multiple theoretical constructions of childhood when analysing contemporary child policies and child-centred mobilisations (James and Prout, 1997; Prout, 2003, 2005; Wyness, 2000; Wyness, 2006b). As argued by King (1999: 15), 'the moral status attributed to children at the outset, the images of the child that a parent, school or society have constructed, determines in no small degree the moral agendas which the child is presumed to need'. Four main understandings of the child, clearly marked by the context in which they were formulated, have informed policy-making and collective action: (a) the sacralised child, (b) the unruly and deviant child, (c) the child as embodying the future of society, and (d) more recently the child as a social actor and bearer of rights, including the right to participate.

The sacralised child

According to the literature, society's concerns for children, and ensuing mobilisations, are closely connected to the 'sacralisation' (Cunningham, 2005: 193) of the child that occurred in the late nineteenth century in both the United States and Western Europe (Hendrick, 1997, 2003; Martin-Fugier, 1978; Sirota, 2001; Zelizer, 1985). In this process of 'sacralisation', the nineteenth century economically useful working child was replaced by the 'twentieth-century economically useless but emotionally priceless child' (Zelizer, 1985: 209). This transformation was accompanied by the

entrenchment within society of a particular Western conception of childhood, defined as a time of innocence and defencelessness (Boyden, 1997; Piper, 1999; Stephens, 1995), a conception deeply embedded in Western literary and religious culture. In that context, adults became, from the nineteenth century, responsible for protecting and separating children from the outside adult world (Donzelot, 1977; Hendrick, 1997; Mayall, 2001; Stephens, 1995), including that of paid work (Roche, 1999).

This image directly informed the so-called 'moral crusades' that took place from the late nineteenth century in Western Europe around infant mortality, child labour, child poverty, and schooling (Behlmer, 1982; Dekker, 2007; Dupont-Bouchat, 2002; Hendrick, 1997; Martin-Fugier, 1978; Piper, 1999). These ultimately resulted in the abolition of child labour and the introduction of compulsory schooling in both France and England. This image also informed more recent political and social mobilisations aiming to protect child welfare and well-being (Best, 1987, 1990). Authors have shown how child physical and sexual abuse more particularly have featured prominently as some of the biggest concerns in contemporary society, bringing the issue of child protection under the spotlight (Bachelet, 1991; Becquemin, 2005; Cohen, 2002a; Neuilly and Zgoba, 2006; Parton, 1979, 1997, 2006; Serre, 2001; Wyness, 2000). Some of the widely publicised cases of child physical and sexual abuse led to (quasi) 'moral panics' in both France and Britain (Becquemin, 2005; Cohen, 2002a). These often resulted in the enactment of more protective policies. In England, the Children Acts 1989 and 2004 were, for instance, drafted following a series of high-profile cases of child abuse, which raised intense public outrage.

The unruly and deviant child

The sacralised view of the child has however been consistently challenged by concerns relating to the unruly and deviant child, and youth delinquency (Cohen, 2002a; Cunningham, 2005). As such, while child-centred movements have aimed to protect the child, they have simultaneously been driven by the objective of securing some form of social control over children and their families (Behlmer, 1982; Brown, 2004; Cannan, 1992; Cunningham, 2005; Dekker, 2007; Stora-Lamarre, 1999)⁵. At the end of the nineteenth century, campaigns over child labour, compulsory schooling, better social protection and re-education homes were therefore partly predicated on the will to reduce risks of delinquency induced by bad discipline within working-class families (Behlmer, 1982; Cannan, 1992; Dekker, 2007; Donzelot, 1977; Tétard, 2001). ‘Saving the child’ from deprivation and depravity became the aim of innumerable voluntary organisations, leagues and philanthropic societies (Becker and Dekker, 2002; Behlmer, 1982; Dekker, 2007). This went on into the 20th century with the emergence of preventative penology to deal with young people identified as actual or potential threats to society (Parton, 1998). In Britain, youth crimes and acts of violence⁶ highlighted the ‘darker side of children’s nature’ (Boyden, 1997: 193), whose innocence could no longer be taken for granted (James and Jenks, 1996; Jenks and Fionda, 2001). In France, youth delinquency has entered into public debates particularly with regard to the youth of the French ‘banlieues’ (Dubet, 1992;

⁵ The industrial revolution had indeed placed the children of the poor in a visible and public situation where it was manifest that their upbringing was in stark contrast to ‘the precepts of nature’. Cannan argues that Barnardo’s and other large child welfare charities, like the Church of England Waifs and Strays (now Children’s Society), saw “children from the lower classes as social threats: the child in danger and the dangerous child were equally the ground from which crime, social disorder and vice grew” (1992: 54-55).

⁶ The murder of Jamie Bulger by two ten-year old children in late 1993 gave rise to

Lapeyronnie, 1987). Children's anti-social and delinquent behaviour have been largely associated in public discourse with parental irresponsibility and lack of proper treatment within dysfunctional families (Boyden, 1997; Cohen, 2002a; Davis and Bourhill, 1997; Wyness et al., 2004).

The child as the future of society

In both France and Britain, authors have documented how the understanding of the child as representing the future of the nation has long informed collective action and policy-making on behalf of children (Commaille and Martin, 1998; Lister, 2003; Martin-Fugier, 1978; Pupavac, 2002; Schafer, 1997; Stora-Lamarre, 1999). In particular, studies have pointed at the close link between increased concerns over childhood and situations of societal crisis and anxieties for society's future (Commaille and Martin, 1998; Fritz and Altheide, 1987; Pupavac, 2002; Stora-Lamarre, 1999). It seems that society feels the need to protect children when they feel that the destiny of the nation is under threat.

The child as a social actor and bearer of rights

Abuses and neglect within families have, since the second half of the twentieth century, raised awareness among legal scholars and policy-makers of the necessity to pay attention to children's own views, rights and interests as children (Wiegers, 2002) (Brannen and O'Brien, 1996; Freeman, 1997). This contributed to enshrining the image of the child as a bearer of rights, which was ultimately endorsed by the 1989 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), to which both France and Britain are signatories.

In parallel, the increased understanding of children as social actors has been strongly influenced by sociological studies of childhood (James and Prout, 1997; Prout, 2005; Prout et al., 2006), which in return informed broader political and social contexts (Wyness, 2000). An increasing number of studies have documented children and young people's participation in political activities (Prout, 2003) such as school strikes (Cunningham and Lavalette, 2002; Cunningham and Lavalette, 2004), school councils (Wyness, 2003, 2006a), or extra-curricular campaigning activities (Roker et al., 1999). The children's movement constitutes, according to some authors, the culmination of children's political activism (Franklin and Franklin, 1996; Stasiulis, 2002). All these studies note the central role played by children as competent social actors. They contrast the mixed outcomes of top-down initiatives undertaken by the State to incentivise children's participation (Stasiulis, 2002; Wyness, 2006a; Wyness et al., 2004) to children's feeling of achievement resulting from bottom-up initiatives which they can take ownership of (Cunningham and Lavalette, 2004).

The literature suggests therefore that mobilisations for, on behalf of or of children have been influenced by specific understandings of children and childhood, themselves construed in particular contexts. My analysis precisely aims to explore how these conceptions have 'shaped' grassroots mobilisations in support of 'non-status' children in France and England.

Let us now turn to the function and role played by those that advocate on behalf of children.

Diverse and well-integrated child advocates

The reviewed literature generally points to the wide range of actors involved in support of children over time and space, from feminist activists to conservative moralists (Brown, 2004; Cohen, 2002a; Hart, 2006; Kitzinger, 1997). According to the literature, this broad base for support ensured that none of the political parties monopolised the issue of child welfare (Dekker, 2007). Both historical and contemporary studies draw a picture of child advocates and supporters as actors well-integrated within society and possessing intellectual and economic resources. Their high-profile position within society and in political circles secured close interpersonal relationships with decision-makers, which gave particular resonance to their claims and induced policy reforms (Behlmer, 1982; Dessertine, 1999; Dupont-Bouchat, 2002; Hendrick, 1997).

In both countries, organisations and institutional actors have long been involved in promoting child welfare and education. In Britain, a few large-scale child welfare organisations⁷ have been remarkable for their longstanding activities as both service providers and for their integration within the social and political landscape (Dobrowolsky and Lister, 2005; Williams and Roseneil, 2004). The interventionist role played by the French state, as compared to the originally non-interventionist British state, to some extent prevented the institutionalisation of such large non-governmental service providers specialised in child welfare. However, as documented by

⁷ The main organisations are National Society for the Protection of Cruelty against Children (NSPCC), the Children's Society, Save the Children and Barnardo's.

French scholars, Republican elites, such as judges or teachers, were involved early on in defending child welfare in France (Stora-Lamarre, 1999).

Commentators of child-focused campaigns have also documented the importance of the media as allies in the claims-making process. Sensationalist stories or 'horror stories' (as in the case of child abuse or child abduction), portraying the child as an innocent victim, have been used as a way to denounce social problems and to call for future action (Best, 1987, 1990; Kitzinger, 1997; Serre, 2001).

Framing processes

As argued by Imig (2006), a key dimension of policy debates with regard to children takes place at the level of framing by the actors concerned. For social movement entrepreneurs, the issue at stake lies in couching their message in order for it to resonate with the public and political elites' own values and principles.

Best (1987) identifies four main images used to exemplify social problems involving children: the 'rebellious' child that causes trouble, the 'deprived' child whose situation is to be blamed on his/her parents, the 'sick' child and finally the child victim. This fourth image is seemingly the most dramatic and emotionally powerful image, that of the innocent and vulnerable child menaced by the deviancy of others. This image is so powerful, Best (1990) argues, that claims-makers supporting socially deprived and sick children also tend to adopt this image.

The literature on child-focused social movements suggests that ‘moral campaigners’ or ‘social entrepreneurs’ strategically resort to the sentimentalised image of the child as a vulnerable, passive and innocent victim in order to secure positive media coverage and gain support (Best, 1987, 1990; Brown, 2004; Kitzyner, 1988, 1997; Roche, 1999). Kitzyner argues that child abuse advocates in the USA thus undertook a ‘fetichistic glorification of the ‘innate innocence’ of childhood’ (1997: 168), in order to counter images of ‘Lolitas’ consenting to sexual activities with adults. Commentators argue that *Childhood* as a stage of life has also been presented as being under attack. Social problems affecting children have thus been presented as a ‘crime against childhood’ (Kitzyner, 1997: 165), leading to ‘stolen childhoods’ (Blanchet, 1996; Boyden, 1997).

According to Best (1994), claims-makers are aware that people will more readily agree to help children they perceive as innocent and vulnerable than adults who they may partly blame for the situation they are in. As a result, ‘claims-makers and the media use portrayals of victimised young children as a rhetorical strategy to convey the severity of problems also affecting adults’ (Thorne, 1987: 90). The instrumental value of focusing on children has been identified in different contexts and with regard to widely differing social problems, such as poverty (Kotlowitz, 1991; Lister, 2006; Wiegers, 2002), natural and man-made emergencies (Juhem, 2004; Slim, 1994), and divorce (Coltrane and Adams, 2003; Ridge, 2003). Juhem (2004) argues that the figure of the child represents a powerful ‘mobilising’ strategy likely to provoke emotion to the extent that it displays stereotypical characteristics of victimhood and does not as yet possess any clearly defined

social identity. Claims on behalf of children tend therefore to present an 'iconised' image of the child without reference to social class, gender, ethnicity or religion (Dobrowolsky and Lister, 2005; Juhem, 2004). Authors thereby note a tendency among child advocates and claims-makers to essentialise the child, thereby failing to acknowledge the diversity and plurality of childhoods (Dobrowolsky, 2002; Hart, 2006).

Concerns have been expressed over the potential counterproductive effects of articulating a romanticised vision of the child within child-centred mobilisations (Dobrowolsky and Lister, 2005; James and Prout, 1997; Kitzinger, 1997). The resort to an idealised child figure presents certain constraints for those children who do not fit the iconised image and may, as a result, be stigmatised, excluded or silenced. Brown (2004) and Ayre (2001) thus show how in the 20th century, the social problem of child abuse became framed in terms of the innocence and passivity of the 'unknowing' victim, while child prostitution has continued to be construed as involving 'knowing children'.

The risks arising from an idealisation of the child do not only concern children deviating from this image. According to Dobrowolsky and Lister (2005), anyone not fitting this image may as a result be separated out and treated differently. For instance, authors have pointed at the tendency to pathologise and stigmatise parents for any situation deemed as potentially negative for the child (Becquemin, 2005; Davis and Bourhill, 1997: 36; Hacking, 1991; Parton, 1998, 2006). Wiegers (2002) thus argues that contrary to the hopes of anti-poverty activists, a child poverty focus does not avoid debates on deservingness, and leaves 'unaddressed assumptions

regarding the conduct and culpability of parents' (Wiegers, 2002: 42). The issue of deservingness is also raised in the context of wars, conflicts and mass poverty. As argued by Burman (1994: 243), if children are the innocent victims of circumstances beyond their control, then this suggests that adults are responsible for their plight.

Furthermore, the increased focus on children within public discussions and policy making has been identified by commentators as being likely to divert attention from the structural causes of social problems and how these truly impact on children (Briggs, 2003; Dobrowolsky and Lister, 2005; Hart, 2006). It has been argued that the focus on children acts as a form of 'neutraliser' within public debates, tending to direct attention away from structural explanations for poverty, famine and other disasters, including international, political, military and economic causes (Hart, 2006; Wiegers, 2002). Triggered by the children's perceived neutrality (Boyden, 1994), child-centred humanitarianism can thus be regarded as representing the most neutral form of humanitarianism (Juhem, 2004).

Close relation between child-centred mobilisations and policy-making

Individual studies have highlighted the remarkable success of claims presenting children as victims in bringing about policy reforms (Behlmer, 1982; Neuilly and Zgoba, 2006; Piper, 1999; Walgrave and Verhulst, 2006). As argued by Behlmer (1982: 193), by the early twentieth century, public mobilisation for the health and safety of children forced the state to assume

greater responsibility for the welfare of its youngest citizens. In cases of 'moral panic like' public concerns, the rapid enactment of laws or other political decisions shows the extent to which the state feels drawn into responding in order to appease fears within the population (Neuilly and Zgoba, 2006). It appears from the literature that laws passed as a result of intense mobilisations centred on the child often constitute 'feel-good' legislation (Neuilly and Zgoba, 2005, 2006). The aim is thereby to appease the population and accordingly put an end to mobilisations while potentially limiting the scope of changes called for by the population (Walgrave and Verhulst, 2006). It has to be said, however, that long-standing situations affecting children in Western countries, such as child poverty, do not give rise to 'moral panics' and thus rarely benefit from such emergency policy-making.

Overall, it appears from the literature that the child and the many images it is associated with – innocence, potential deviancy, the future of society – constitute a central mobilising figure. We have seen how context, actors and framing processes concur to prioritise child-related concerns within Western societies such as France and Britain. As much as childhood(s) are diverse, child-centred campaigns present a diversity of concerns common to most Western countries – education, child abuse, child labour, child neglect. The fact that actors mobilising on behalf of children tend to be well-integrated within the socio-political landscape contributes to the sustainability and the success of child-centred claims. We have also seen the power of the image of the child as a victim and its strategic use for wider purposes. This indicates the potentially wide support 'non-status' children are likely to receive as children. However, this is likely to be mediated by the

negative representations and relative marginalisation of irregular migrants and asylum-seekers in France and Britain, as is considered in the next section.

2.3 Mobilisations of and on behalf of ‘non-status’ migrants

‘Non-status’ children, as migrants, enter a policy field that strongly differs from contemporary child policies and mobilisations – that of migration and asylum. I will discuss these issues in the following section.

The migration and asylum context in France and Britain

Commentators have documented a parallel evolution over the past thirty years with regard to migration and asylum policies in France and Britain (Germain and Lassalle, 2006; Joly, 1996). Authors have commented on the hostile agenda in Europe against refugees and asylum-seekers (Bigo, 1998; Joly, 1996; Joly and Cohen, 1989; Noiriél, 1998; Nyers, 2006; Valluy, 2005; Wihtol de Wenden, 1994a). Numerous authors documented the process of stigmatisation of ‘non-status’ migrants that took place in both countries (Bigo, 1998; Bloch and Schuster, 2005; Chimni, 1998; Cohen, 2002a; Legoux, 1995; Nyers, 2003, 2006; Valluy, 2005, 2007; Wihtol de Wenden, 2002). Nyers (2006: 54) argues that this process of stigmatisation resulted in migrants being cast as ‘undesirable and possibly dangerous outsiders’. In this context, the term ‘unwanted migrant’ (Joppke, 1998: 109) emerged as a

new sociologically relevant social concept to describe any migrant whose presence is politically unwelcome or unsolicited by the host country⁸.

France and Britain, in a wider context of Europeanization of migration policies, considerably tightened their border controls including direct pre-entry measures and in-country controls (Bousquet, 2006; Germain and Lassalle, 2006; Guiraudon, 2000; Guiraudon and Joppke, 2001; Guiraudon and Lahav, 2006; Layton-Henry, 1992; Noiriel, 2006; Valluy, 2005; Wihtol de Wenden, 2006; Zetter et al., 2003). In a context of increased suspicion towards asylum-seekers, the rate of rejected asylum applications has steadily risen to reach more than 80% of applications in both France and Britain (Bousquet, 2006; Valluy, 2006; Zetter et al., 2003), despite the long tradition in both countries of providing asylum to those fighting for political freedom (Delouvin, 2000; Gibney, 2004; Wihtol de Wenden, 1994a). Wide-ranging policy changes also resulted in the 'actual production of irregularity' leading an immigrant with a legal residence permit into a situation of illegality (Cohen, 2001; Coutin and Chock, 1995; Fassin, 1996; Ferré, 1997; Freedman, 2004; Joppke, 1999; Lochak, 1997; Noiriel, 1998; Siméant, 1993, 1998).

The decision to implement more restrictive policies has gone hand in hand with a securitisation of migration (Turk, 2003). Removals have emerged as central pillars of French and British migration policy, and, in both countries, removal targets were set in recent years (Wolton, 2006; Zetter et al., 2003). Detention constitutes another crucial element of the securitisation

⁸ While this concept was previously only used by researchers (Joppke, 1998; Nyers, 2003, 2006) to describe an unspoken reality, it has now been introduced as a mainstream political argument (see Nicolas Sarkozy's concept of 'immigration subie' or 'suffered migration', a concept he introduced from 2003 (Paillard, 2003)). Sami Nair, French philosopher and advisor on immigration matters to Lionel Jospin's Interior Minister, Jean-Pierre Chevènement, in 1997-1998, was the first, however, to use the expression in 1997 (Nair, 1997). This shows that this idea is shared across the political divide.

of migration and asylum policies (Bloch and Schuster, 2005; Valluy, 2005; Welch and Schuster, 2005). Britain, in particular, has considerably and repeatedly revisited its national asylum system from a security angle, thereby increasingly resorting to detention as a mechanism of control (Bloch and Schuster, 2005). In Britain, asylum-seekers can be detained at any stage of the asylum process – on arrival, waiting for the appeal decision or prior to removal⁹ - and for an indefinite amount of time¹⁰. By contrast, undocumented migrants in France can only be detained for 32 days¹¹. The number of individuals detained in France is also smaller than in Britain. In 2010, 3,000 individuals can be detained in Britain at any one time¹², compared to approximately 1,720 in France. In addition, in France, asylum-seekers flying into airports and considered as being insufficiently documented can be kept in ‘waiting zones’ at the border and then be prevented from entering the country (Joppke and Marzal, 2004: 830; Nyers, 2003).

Both France and Britain have also introduced ‘deterrent’ measures relating in particular to the provision of welfare and housing and the access to employment and health services (Christie and Sidhu, 2006; Delouvin, 2000; Flynn, 2005; Schuster, 2003b; Stanley, 2005). The right to work for asylum-seekers has been withdrawn in both France and Britain (since 1991 and 2002 respectively). Prevented from accessing paid employment legally,

⁹ The arrest of a number of asylum-seekers suspected of being involved in recent terrorist actions reinforced the link in the popular imagination between asylum and terrorism (Wolton, 2006).

¹⁰ At the end of December 2009, 2,595 individuals were detained under Immigration Act powers. Out of these, 1,025 had been detained for more than two months, and 210 for over a year (Home Office, 2010).

¹¹ An Immigration, Integration and Nationality bill was adopted by the French Government in March 2010. It aims, among other things, to extend the maximum limit of detention to forty-five days. The text will be discussed in the French ‘Assemblée Nationale’ from September 2010.

¹² The Labour Government planned to increase the detention capacity to 4,000 places, but the change in government might have compromised these plans.

asylum-seekers (and irregular migrants) are unable to build social bridges with the majority community, since it is in the work or training place that contacts can best be made (Ager and Strang, 2004). In the absence of a systematic right to work, asylum-seekers have had to rely on state welfare. This 'imposed' dependency (Wren, 2007) further enshrines the idea that asylum-seekers are recipients of welfare rather than contributors to society (Bloch and Schuster, 2002). It also reinforces the unbalanced relationship between statutory organisations delivering services and the asylum population, thereby acting against the creation of positive social links (Beirens et al., 2007; Bigo, 1998).

Since the late 1990s, the UK government has introduced measures conditioning access to welfare (Schuster, 2003a; Schuster, 2005; Schuster and Solomos, 2004)¹³. In particular, to access benefits, asylum-seekers have to accept mandatory dispersal (Bloch and Schuster, 2005; Schuster, 2005). This measure, implemented from 2000, was meant to relieve pressure on housing in the London area and the South-east of England. However, dispersal regions have also been identified as lacking the necessary infrastructures as well as established voluntary, community and self-help organisations (Beirens et al., 2007; Zetter and Pearl, 2000). This has strongly impacted on asylum-seekers' ability to secure pre-existing social bonds with members of the same religious, ethnic or national community (Beirens et al., 2006, 2007; Zetter et al., 2005: 175)¹⁴.

¹³ This includes removing access to benefits for 'late' applicants or 'failed' asylum-seekers and introducing vouchers instead of cash payments. However, this measure was subsequently abolished due to severe criticisms over its ineffectiveness and stigmatising effect.

¹⁴ Refugee Community Organisations, in particular, have seen their role considerably changed as a result of dispersal (Zetter et al., 2005).

As a result of recent discourses, policies and practices on asylum, ‘non-status’ migrants’ social bridges, social bonds, and social links have been considerably severed (Ager and Strang, 2004; Beirens et al., 2007). Faced with increasingly restrictive policies and practices, ‘non-status’ migrants have sought to organise to defend their cause. This is discussed below.

Mobilisations and collective action in France and Britain: historical context

The scope of mobilisations of and for ‘non-status’ migrants differs widely between France and Britain. In France, social movements of and for undocumented migrants account for an important share of recent mobilisations, as exemplified by the prominent place that analyses of the ‘struggle of the sans papiers’ (McNevin, 2006) have held in recent studies on social movements in France (Crettiez and Sommier, 2002; Hmed and Siméant, 2006; Lloyd, 2003; Mouchard, 2002; Siméant, 1998; Waters, 2003). By contrast, pro-migrant movements do not feature among the recent social movements identified by scholars in Britain (Byrne, 1997; Crossley, 2002; Rootes, 2003).

Mobilisations in Britain

Organised social movements of, and on behalf of, migrants in Britain have been considerably less studied than in France¹⁵, even though some research has recently been dedicated to the issue (Anthias and Lloyd, 2002;

¹⁵ Lloyd (1998) attributes this relative lack of interest to the great emphasis put on researching the impact of anti-racist policies institutionalised in the 1970s (Lloyd, 1998; Statham, 2001).

Bhattacharyya and Gabriel, 2002; Cohen, 2001, 2002b; Kalra, 2006; Lloyd, 1998; Statham, 2001).

Anti-deportation campaigns emerged in the mid/late 1970s to become a dominant feature of British political life in the 1980s (Bhattacharyya and Gabriel, 2002; Bhavnani and Coulson, 1986; Cohen, 2001, 2003). According to Farrar (2004), at that time, anti-deportation campaigns¹⁶ were of such a scope, regularity and influence that it amounted to a social movement, and was regarded as one of the sole sources of opposition to challenge the Conservative Thatcher Government (Cohen, 2002b; Farrar, 2004). However, the widely publicised arrest of Viraj Mendis, a Sri Lankan who had found sanctuary in a Church in 1989, marked the start of the decline of campaigns against removals (Cohen, 2002b; Farrar, 2004). This decline was a result of the campaign of stigmatisation undertaken by the British State with regard to asylum-seekers.

Scholars have documented a renewed interest and militancy in support of asylum-seekers since the mid-1990s (Farrar, 2004; Lloyd, 1998; Sales, 2002). The set up of the National Coalition of Anti-Deportations Campaigns (NCADC) in 1995, an organisation that provides support to rejected asylum-seekers and helps publicise and organise anti-deportation campaigns, is regarded as a symbol of this renewal (Farrar, 2004; Hayter, 2004; Lloyd, 1998). However, as argued by Statham (2001) and Farrar (2004), these grassroots campaigning activities have received little national media coverage, and therefore remain rather marginalised in the public domain.

¹⁶ Campaigns mainly concerned migrant workers, spouses of migrants or nationals from the Commonwealth.

Mobilisations in France

While most of the literature relates to the 'sans papiers' movement of 1996-1997, Siméant's (1998) study shows that mobilisations of, and in support of, irregular migrants have been taking place since the 1970s, and almost always coincided with the introduction of restrictive pieces of legislation on asylum and immigration. However, it is in the latter part of the 1990s that the movement developed into a broader movement including 'sans papiers' and powerful support from civil society (Hmed and Siméant, 2006; Siméant, 1998). From March to August 1996 undocumented migrants received substantial media coverage following their repeated occupation of churches, in particular that of Saint-Bernard in Paris¹⁷. On 23 August 1996, the police intervened to evict the hunger strikers and their supporters from the Saint-Bernard church. This provoked a large wave of public support and demonstrations for the 'sans papiers' with 13,500 people demonstrating in Paris (Blin, 2005; Hmed and Siméant, 2006; Lloyd, 2003). A few months later, a similarly publicised issue – a law requiring French citizens to report to the authorities when hosting third country nationals – mobilised a large part of the French population, culminating in 100,000 people demonstrating in Paris and a petition with 120,000 signatures.

One of the successes of the 1996 movement of undocumented migrants in France is to have led to a change in public image from the threatening figure of the 'clandestine' or illegal migrant to that of the 'sans papiers' (McNevin, 2006; Rosello, 1998; Siméant, 1998). This expression offered a non-criminalising alternative to the connoted term 'clandestine' and

¹⁷ For a detailed account of the Saint-Bernard occupation, refer to Blin (2000, 2005) and Hmed (2006)

enabled the 'sans papiers' to be viewed as victims of an unjust state's decisions (Drugan et al., 2004; Lloyd, 2003; Mouchard, 2003; Rosello, 1998; Waters, 2003). Finally, the term 'sans papiers' provided the opportunity for undocumented migrants to blur any religious or ethnic belonging, (Rosello, 1998; Siméant, 1998) (Gresh, 2009; Hargreaves, 2007), which remains a controversial issue in France. However, from 1997–98, coinciding with the return to power of the left, the sans-papiers movement lost unity, power and media presence, becoming a nationally fragmented movement (Rawlings, 2004). Tensions among supporters about the way to support the movement, the absence of a centrally organised coordination structure and the decline in media coverage further contributed to the weakening of the movement (Hmed and Siméant, 2006; Rawlings, 2004).

As such, we can argue that in 2007, at the time where the research project started, neither in France nor in Britain, mobilisations of, and in favour of, 'non-status' migrants could be said to amount to social movements¹⁸. In France, previous widely-publicised mobilisations opened the door, however, to a more positive stance towards 'non-status' migrants than in Britain.

Structural weakness and marginality of support organisations

Given their degree of exclusion and marginalisation, 'non-status' migrants have had to partly rely on supporters to defend their cause. This required them to constitute transversal alliances to ensure the sustainability of the movement (Blin, 2005; Cohen, 2001; Siméant, 1998; Statham, 2001).

¹⁸ From 2008, however, irregular migrant workers started to mobilise in France to protest against their precarious working and living conditions and to advocate for a large-scale regularisation scheme for migrant workers.

The reviewed literature generally refers to the structural weakness of 'non-status' migrants' supporters. The literature in both France and Britain refers to a heterogeneous group of supporters, with the regular presence of far-left parties and organisations, pro-migrant and anti-racist organisations, and church representatives. In contrast to child-centred campaigners, supporters of 'non-status' migrants are characterised to be isolated and marginal within civil-society (Freedman, 2004; Haus, 1999; Lloyd, 2003; Siméant, 1998; Statham, 2001; Statham and Geddes, 2006; Valluy, 2007; Wright, 2003)¹⁹.

An important exception with regard to the marginality of supporters is the continuous involvement of Churches (Byrne, 2004; Crittenden, 1998; Manne and Corlett, 2004; Tomsho, 1987). In France the Catholic Church has played a recurring role (Siméant, 1998), even though higher authorities remained reluctant to fully back protest actions (Siméant, 1998, 1999). In Britain, the Church and faith-based groups have featured among 'non-status' migrants' most prominent allies (Statham, 2001; Zetter et al., 2005).

The judiciary has also played an important role in the defence of migrants' and asylum-seekers' rights both in France and Britain (Freeman, 2006: 238; Gibney, 2004; Joppke, 1998, 2001; Joppke and Marzal, 2004; Statham, 2001: 143). The courts furthermore provided a staging grounds for 'cause lawyers' – those aiming to uphold a particular cause by legal means – involved in support of migrants (Israël, 2003).

¹⁹ In recent years, and in particular since 2007, undocumented workers on strike have been supported by unions such as the Confédération Générale du Travail (CGT).

A final exception with regard to the isolation of supporters is the 1996-1997 movement in France, which largely stands out with regard to the publicisation of the cause and the large support it received. The 'sans papiers' managed to gain large and diversified support from politicians, unionists, intellectuals and professionals (Blin, 2005; Hmed and Siméant, 2006; Mouchard, 2003).

Movements of or on behalf of migrants? Tensions and ambiguities among activists

The literature stresses the tensions occurring between actors directly concerned by the action and their supporters with regard to the orientation, objectives and representation of the movement (Cohen, 2001; Hayter, 2004; Wright, 2003). From the 1990s, the 'sans papiers' in France have strongly insisted on being considered as an autonomous movement, independent from French humanitarian and refugee organisations (Cissé, 1996, 1999; Hayter, 2004; Lloyd, 1998; Nyers, 2006)²⁰. This movement aimed to counter tendencies among refugee and migrant organisations to take for granted the act of speaking 'on behalf of' the 'sans papiers' (Cissé, 1996; Cohen, 2001; Lloyd, 2003). In their influential study on poor people's mobilisations, Piven and Cloward (1977) argue that support organisations consistently try to channel the claims of actors lacking resources, denaturing them in the process to make them 'acceptable' to the authorities. As a result, organisations opt for a pragmatic discourse resonating with the state, thereby

²⁰ In fact, during the 1996 movement, the General Assemblies held to decide upon the orientation of the movement – 'les réunions des familles' – were restricted to sans papiers only, thereby excluding support organisations, to prevent cooptation.

prevailing over a more 'radical' stance (Bigo, 1998; Hayter, 2004; Lloyd, 2003). Scholars argue that such an overcautious approach in the case of campaigns on behalf of immigrants resulted from organisations' dependency on state funding (Hmed and Siméant, 2006; Lloyd, 1998; Lloyd, 2003; Mouchard, 2002; Rutter, 2006; Siméant, 1999; Valluy, 2007).

Framing activities and discourses: tensions between the humanitarian and the political dimensions

Researchers have documented the tension between a limited humanitarian objective aiming to save the 'needy victims' and a more political aim of conceiving a new form of citizenship based on a redefinition of the political community (Balibar, 1999; Blin, 2005; Nyers, 2006; Ticktin, 2005). We will see that this tension permeates all actions and discourse of mobilised actors.

In both France and Britain, lobbying work on asylum and migration is mainly undertaken by organisations providing state-funded services, such as the British Refugee Council (Rutter, 2006; Statham, 2001) or France Terre d'Asile and the Cimade (Siméant, 1993; Valluy, 2007). According to Siméant, undocumented migrants in France tend to resort initially to conventional means, such as meetings with the authorities and negotiation talks. However, the limited results of conventional politics often lead them to opt for less conventional activities²¹, in particular civil disobedience. Civil disobedience is a concept that was first developed by Henry David Thoreau (1849) with regard to acts of resistance to the Civil Government. Actors embrace

²¹ This is exemplified by the movement of failed asylum-seekers in 1992-1993, who after two years of unsuccessful negotiations and meetings with authorities, resorted to a hunger strike (Siméant, 1993).

repertoires of civil disobedience with the objective of raising awareness over the illegitimacy of a law or measure undertaken by the state (Cohen and Arato, 1992; Mouchard, 2002)²².

Hunger-strikes and church occupations

According to Siméant (1993, 1998, 1999), hunger strikes have been a constant and predominating form of resistance of undocumented migrants in France since the 1970s, commonly undertaken collectively within churches. In Britain, recent studies have focused on individual cases of hunger strike undertaken in the late 1990s/2000s in relation to failed asylum applications and detention (Briskman and Cemlyn, 2005; Edkins and Pin-Fat, 2005; Stevens, 1998). The act of hunger striking is viewed as one of the most violent forms of resistance employed by migrants, especially when they are associated with actions of lip-sewing (Edkins and Pin-Fat, 2005). Protesters thereby seek to acquire a political dimension through disruptive action (Gamson, 1990). However, for actors already stigmatised and presented as a threat in the public discourse, resorting to violence is likely to reinforce prejudices and therefore undermine their cause. As a result, direct violence against anybody else than the protesters themselves tends to be avoided (Siméant, 1993). Hunger strikes thus represent a form of protest 'by default' for migrants constrained by their situation of irregularity and marginality²³.

²² The appeal against the Debré Bill in February 1997 is seen as a paradigmatic case of a campaign for civil disobedience (Hmed and Siméant, 2006; Lloyd, 2003; Mouchard, 2002)²². The appeal called for an open transgression of the law, seen as infringing French citizen's rights and liberties. According to Balibar (1999), this event reminded the population that civil disobedience, with the risks it presents, constitutes an essential part of citizenship.

²³ According to Mouchard (2002), the containment of violence is mainly due to the presence of experienced unionists and political activists who are aware of the risks of resorting to violence.

The issue of the hunger strike provides an interesting insight into the articulation between the individual and the collective. Small groups of hunger-strikers often claim to represent the entire group of undocumented migrants. However, paradoxically, after a certain amount of time, strikers are physically so weak that their health becomes the main issue of concern. Increased duration therefore results in the almost unavoidable personalisation of the struggle, thereby obliterating any aspiration for a large-scale outcome (Blin, 2005; Siméant, 1999). As pointed out by Mouchard (2002), hunger strikes constantly threaten to fall into miserabilism or to turn into a 'humanitarian masquerade' (Abdallah, 1997). Protesters' original objective of political self-affirmation turns into an act of humanitarian benevolence of the state (Blin, 2005).

The occupation of sites constitutes another form of civil disobedience undertaken by undocumented migrants (Mouchard, 2003; Nyers, 2006). Taking sanctuary in a religious building, in particular a church, has a long history (Long, 2001)²⁴ and is 'rooted in the idea of a sacred space of protection, free from governmental power' (Nyers, 2006: 1085). According to Siméant (1998), from the 1970s on, churches have consistently acted as sanctuaries for undocumented migrants, providing a 'free zone of asylum' to undocumented migrants, despite reluctance from Catholic authorities (Blin, 2005; Siméant, 1998). Though less documented than in France, the practice of sanctuary has also been resorted to in Britain (Cohen, 2001). The most

²⁴ The 'sanctuary movement' in the United States represents one of the most publicised cases of church occupation (Gibson, 1991; Wiltfang and McAdam, 1991). Between 1980 and 1992, approximately 500 congregations in the US decided to offer sanctuary to thousands of Central American refugees threatened with deportation as a way to shelter them from the authorities.

prominent case was in 1989, featuring a Sri-Lankan national threatened with deportation. It was abruptly brought to an end by the violent intervention of the police and his subsequent deportation.

The practice of sanctuary represents a tactical choice. It highlights the multi-dimensional aspect of migrants' movements between political affirmation, which occupying buildings contributes to, and a de facto humanitarian need for protection, which the church is meant to provide. It is also powerful with regard to attracting media coverage and public support (Rosello, 1998). The highly dramatic nature of the intervention points to the stark unbalance in the confrontation between peaceful and religious hunger strikers, embodying the good, and the police, represented as the evil, oppressive system. Once again, the will for political affirmation is ranked behind the representation of movement actors as being martyred by an evil system.

Ideational Framing in France and Britain

A large part of the reviewed literature points to the significance of ideas and sentiments to ensure the emergence, sustainability and success of movements. It appears from the literature that ideational frames are highly conditioned by the culture, politics and history of each national country. As a consequence, we find two different sets of ideational frames for France and Britain, even though movements of and on behalf of migrants do use common frames of argumentation²⁵.

²⁵ The high number of studies undertaken on the political mobilisation of undocumented migrants in France facilitates the identification of master frames used by activists. In contrast, studies on mobilisation in Britain remain more limited and therefore constrain the ability to generalise from previous findings.

I have previously discussed the successful requalification of irregular migrants as 'sans papiers' in France. According to Rosello (1998), the media played an important role in the construction of the 'sans papiers' as a legitimate group, contributing to eliciting an unexpected movement of generosity among the French public. The success of the framing of the actors' struggle as a struggle for papers is closely linked to the deep resonance this had in the French context. Contemporary French social movements are strongly set within the French discursive context of the nation, the republic and the universalism of social rights (Crettiez and Sommier, 2002; Dubet, 2004; Jefferys, 2003; Moreno Fuentes, 2005), which gives them a clear civic dimension (Waters, 2003). Despite the actual outsider status of undocumented people with regard to citizenship, the movement of the 'sans papiers' in France does not depart from the aforementioned patterns of mobilisation. The inherited principles of the Enlightenment and the French Revolution constitute recurring arguments in the discourse of anti-racist and pro-migrant actors, including the 'sans papiers' and their supporters (Bigo, 1998; Dubois, 2000; Koopmans et al., 2005; Lloyd, 1998).

The concept of 'sans papiers' has no such resonance in the British context (Allred, 2003). In a country opposed to ID-cards, the fact of 'not having papers' has never been a political issue. As a consequence, such a framing does not resonate with British cultural politics and history. However, the role of the morals within social protests, rarely mentioned among commentators of French social movements, has been the focus of numerous studies in Britain (Cohen, 2002a; Goode and Ben-Yehuda, 1994), confirming

that the notion of morals is of importance within British society. This relates directly to the influence of the Church in 'moral reform', which moulded moral values (Roberts, 2004). According to Statham (2001: 150), 'pro-migrant claims-makers undertake consensus mobilisation strategies by making moral appeals to society's values'.

In Western countries, the representation of undocumented migrants and asylum-seekers as victims during pro-migrant mobilisations has been largely documented (Agrikoliansky, 2003; Fassin, 2001; Fujiwara, 2005; Statham, 2001). For instance, Fujiwara (2005) documents the action of reframing undertaken by migrants and their supporters in the United States in reaction to policy plans removing social benefits from long-term migrants. She argues that the success of the coalition fighting for the restoration of these benefits lies in the rhetorical focus on elderly and disabled migrants framed as victims 'worthy of sympathy' (Fujiwara, 2005: 82).

2.4 'Non-status' children in France and England: policy context and literature

The ambivalent situation of the 'non-status' child, in between the broadly supported child in need of protection and the marginalised migrant, makes it particularly difficult to predict how, why and with which support mobilisations against child deportations take place in France and England. To add to the problem, the literature on such mobilisations is highly limited. There is, however, considerably more literature on the needs and experiences of 'non-status' migrant children.

This section is divided into two main subsections. The first one investigates the specific policy context in which ‘non-status’ children and families are embedded. The second considers the literature pertaining to ‘non-status’ children with the aim to understand the central issues raised by this policy field in tension, as documented by the literature.

Children and Families without Legal Status: Policy Context

This section considers the policy context in which children and families without legal status are embedded in France and England. The inclusive protection measures designed for children contrast strongly with policies aimed at excluding migrants from the national interest (as discussed in the previous sections). This dichotomy has implications for those who fall within both categories: ‘non-status’ children.

In both France and England, ‘non-status’ children, as children, are entitled to access most state services as any other child. In both France and England, schooling for children between 5 and 16 years of age is compulsory, according to the Ordinance of the 6 January 1959 in France and the Education Act 1996 in England. This means that in both France and England, all children of compulsory age are to attend school, irrespective of immigration status or rights of residence (Arnot and Pinson, 2005; Candappa, 2000; Hek, 2005b). Despite such non-discriminating rules, French and British governments have enacted specific policies targeting ‘non-status’ foreign minors and their families to reduce their entitlements. I will consider first the situation in England and then the situation in France.

England

As far as (rejected) asylum-seekers' children and unaccompanied minors are concerned, successive governments have attempted simultaneously to remove them from the comprehensive child welfare system, while including them within the wider, more restrictive, asylum policy framework.

From the 1990s, successive UK governments took steps to prevent child-protection safeguards interfering with their asylum policy. In 1993, the Conservative Government thus accessed the UNCRC on the basis of a reservation on immigration and nationality (Giner, 2007). Similarly, the Labour Government discharged the UK Border Agency from the 2004 Children Act duty to have regard to the welfare of the child²⁶. These measures aimed to provide the Government with 'a 'legally unconstrained' room for action' (Giner, 2007: 249) when dealing with children as part of the immigration process. However, following lobbying by refugee and children's organisations, the reservation on immigration and nationality was finally withdrawn in 2008. Similarly, section 55 of the Borders, Citizenship and Immigration Act 2009 now places the duty on the UK Border Agency to 'hav[e] regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children', , on a par with other agencies' obligations. Thus the attempts undertaken by successive UK governments to remove 'non-status' children from the comprehensive child welfare system failed.

Up to the 1990s, the British asylum and immigration legislation focused primarily on adult asylum-seekers without dependents. However, in its

²⁶ Section 11 of the Children Act 2004 places a statutory duty on key institutions to make arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. This wide-ranging statutory duty applies to all public bodies, including the Police and Prisons.

attempt to increase removals, from the early 2000s the Labour government started to rethink its policy towards asylum-seeking children and families. The most notable measures of 'harmonisation' between adult asylum-seekers and families have consisted of measures towards welfare restrictions for families at the end of the asylum process (the so-called Section 9) in 2004²⁷, and extended resort to detention for asylum-seeking families from 2002, with the overall aim of facilitating removal. However, policy-making on asylum-seeking families has proved to be very difficult for the government, and it has been marked by a constant back and forth between greater restrictions and targeted policy concessions (Giner, 2007, 2010). For instance, welfare restrictions for failed asylum-seeking families were ultimately repealed, following an unsuccessful pilot project and widespread criticism regarding its impact on children – destitution and separation from the family²⁸. Destitution, however, remains common practice for childless rejected asylum-seekers²⁹.

With regard to child detention, the government's policy until 2002 was that families should be detained 'as close to removal as possible' (Home Office, 1998: para.12.5)³⁰. However, in 2002, the Home Office indicated its intention to detain families 'for longer periods than immediately prior to removal' (Home Office, 2002: para. 4.77) and in the same circumstances as

²⁷ This clause has now been withdrawn. See Giner (2007) for more detail.

²⁸ Under Schedule 3 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002, failed asylum-seekers without dependents were rendered ineligible for a range of support. In 2003, the government decided to extend this provision to asylum-seekers with dependents. As such, Section 9 of the Asylum and Immigration Act 2004 allows the NASS to withdraw support in a case where the Home Secretary can certify that a person with dependent(s) 'has failed without reasonable excuse to take reasonable steps to leave the UK voluntarily' (Nationality Immigration and Asylum Act, 2004). However, according to the Children Act (1989), LAs have the duty to provide accommodation or financial support to the child in the event of their welfare being compromised. As a consequence of Section 9, if the family does not co-operate, the children may be taken into care by social services.

²⁹ In some cases, pregnant women are made destitute by the State, which does not consider them as parents.

³⁰ Unaccompanied minors, however, cannot be detained.

for single asylum-seekers, that is, at any stage of the process. In 2008, nearly 1,000 children were detained (Home Affairs Committee, 2009). The Children's Commissioner, Al Aynsley-Green, and the Chief Inspector of Prison, Anne Owers, have produced reports expressing concern at detained children's limited access to education and healthcare (Aynsley-Green, 2005; HM Chief Inspector of Prisons, 2008).

Both Section 9 and detention have been fiercely criticised by children's and refugee organisations, Children's Commissioners, and prominent public and political figures. It has been argued that families with children constitute 'easy targets' since they can be easily located through schools, social and health services. It has been furthermore argued that families were likely to be targeted since dependents are included in removal statistics, and thus contribute to increase removal targets (Crawley and Lester, 2005).

In this particularly tense context, the UK government has, however, shown a certain sensitivity to the situation of 'non-status' children. In 2003, it set up a 'one-off exercise' granting leave to remain – an amnesty – to asylum seekers who had applied for asylum before 2001. This amnesty was meant to address the backlog of asylum claims resulting from the stark increase in applications in the late 1990s. However, it only applied to families with children under eighteen years of age who were 'financially and emotionally dependant on the main applicant'.³¹ David Blunkett, the Home Secretary responsible for the amnesty, justified this distinction as follows: '*So what we announced on Friday, was about saying these people are already embedded*

³¹ Immigration and Nationality Directorate. One-off Exercise to Allow Families Who have been in the UK for Three or More Years to Stay in the UK. Available at: <http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/sitecontent/documents/policyandlaw/asylumpolicyinstructions/apunotices/oneoffexercise.pdf?view=Binary>, [last accessed 7th September 2009].

in our community and, it would be not only disproportionate but wrong to uproot those children from school and from the community' (Marr, 2003). By April 2007, more than 24,610 families (82,775 individuals) had been granted Indefinite Leave to Remain (ILR) without further consideration of their asylum claim (Bennett et al., 2007; Home Office, 2009). Overall, approximately 58,000 dependents, most of whom were children, were authorised to settle in the UK thanks to this exercise (Home Office, 2009). Since 2006, a Case Resolution Directorate was formed to deal with the backlog of asylum cases. Though not directly focusing on children, it contains a specific section on 'family cases' and the UK Border Agency states that caseowners are expected to place significant weight on substantial delay in the decision-making process and its impact on asylum-seekers and their family, in particular children under eighteen.

Another indication of specific concern for 'non-status' families with children has been given by the recently formed coalition Government. In its coalition agreement, the Conservative/Lib Dem Government indicated that it would put an end to child detention. A review of alternatives to child detention has been under way since June 2010. At the time of writing, the Government has, however, not yet presented the alternative scheme it aims to implement.

France

In comparison to England, the French government has not implemented as aggressive policies targeted at asylum-seekers' or irregular migrants' children. However, successive governments have attempted to restrict entitlements to French nationality, automatic regularisation, and family

reunification procedures, which all had an impact on the situation of undocumented children and their family.

The issue of entitlements to French nationality has been of particular concern to successive French governments. Since 1889, any child born in France of foreign parents became French automatically either by birth or later on, through the application of *Jus Soli* (birthright citizenship). The automatic application of *Jus Soli* enabled several generations of migrants' children to become French, as conceived by the French Republican tradition of integration. The so-called 'Pasqua law'³² in 1993 aimed to break with this tradition by making it mandatory for children born in France of foreign parents to apply for French citizenship (Costa-Lascoux, 1993, 1994; Weil, 1996). However, in 1998, this requirement was partly removed after the Socialists accessed power. Since the application of the law of 16 March 1998, a child born of foreign parents can become French automatically at the age of 18, if he or she has lived in France for a duration of at least five years (Weil, 2001)³³.

In 2006, the UMP government suppressed migrants' *ipso jure* entitlements to regularisation after having lived for ten years on French territory, even clandestinely. This strongly impacted on irregular migrants and their families. Similarly, increasing restrictions to family reunification procedures considerably affected migrant workers and their children, and it has been argued that it actually created a 'new' influx of irregular migrants:

³² Law n°93-933 of the 22 July 1993

³³ A child can also acquire French citizenship at the age of 16, by declaration, or 13, with his or her personal consent, if he or she has lived in France for a duration of five years.

the children of migrant workers who could not obtain a family reunification visa (de Rudder, 2001).

With regard to detention, families with children can be detained since 2005, but only prior to removal and for a maximum duration of thirty-two days³⁴. Overall, eleven centres are authorised to host children. According to Cimade, these conditions have resulted in a net increase in detention of minors. Numbers remain nonetheless smaller than in Britain. In 2007, 242 children were detained, out of which 80 percent were under ten (Cimade, 2008), as compared to 1,000 children in Britain. The British State thus detains four times more children than the French State.

As in Britain, the French Government has also made child-centred concessions. Interior Minister Nicolas Sarkozy released a circular on 31st October 2005 suspending removals of families with children at school for the entire 2005–06 school year. Later that year, on 13th June 2006, Minister Sarkozy announced the set up of an exceptional regularisation for families who had at least one child of school age attending school in the household.³⁵ Nicolas Sarkozy justified his decision to grant an amnesty based on specific criteria as follows:

When a child is born in France or arrived there as a very small child, is schooled in France, does not speak the language of his country of origin, and therefore has no link with this country, it would be very cruel to forcibly remove him or her (Sarkozy, 2006).

³⁴ This duration might be extended to 45 days according to the Projet de loi relatif à l'Immigration 2010 to be discussed at the Assemblée Nationale in September 2010.

³⁵ The criteria for this exceptional regularisation are listed in the text of the circular no. NOR/INT/K/06/00058/C.

In August 2006, 6,924 families were granted leave to remain out of 33,000 applications (that is, less than one out of four). The number of children granted leave to remain thanks to this procedure remains unknown. In addition to this exceptional regularisation, statistics have shown that between 2004 and 2008, 77,037 main applicants were granted leave to remain in France based on personal and family links³⁶ (Secrétariat Général du Comité Interministériel de Contrôle de l'Immigration, 2009). These 'back-door' regularisations include a large number of parents with children born or growing up in France and young people living in France since the age of ten.

Overall, therefore, we can see some similarities in how increased restrictions in immigration and asylum policies have impacted on 'non-status' children in both France and Britain. Moreover, this analysis has also identified particular entitlements awarded to 'non-status' children, as children, such as compulsory school attendance, as enshrined in French and English law, and also more volatile child-centred policy openings. In both France and Britain, eligibility for recent amnesties or regularisations has largely depended on the presence of a dependent child in the household, be it for pragmatic or child-sensitive reasons. Policies directly targeting children and families affected by immigration controls have oscillated between greater restrictions targeting all 'unwanted migrants', including families, and punctual 'child-friendly' ad-hoc arrangements, such as the 2003 'one-off exercise' in Britain or the 2006 procedure of family regularisation in France. Such ambiguity in policy-making between inclusion and exclusion of asylum-

³⁶ This includes people whose personal and family links are so strong that the refusal to grant leave to remain would disproportionately infringe upon their right to private and family life. Article L313-11 7° (Loi n° 2007-1631 du 20 novembre 2007)

seeking and undocumented children in France and Britain may provide favourable conditions for the emergence and development of mobilisations.

Regularisations thus constitute one particular policy area in which the differentiation between single adults and families with children has been most apparent. Though the link is not definite, the quotes by Home Secretary Blunkett and Minister Sarkozy above suggest that grassroots mobilisations might have had an influence on these particular decisions, since they contributed to highlighting children's high degree of integration. One key element to assess the potential impact of child-centred mobilisations relates furthermore to the number of children actually removed from each country in France and England. To investigate such issue, I took advantage of the Freedom of Information Request procedure in England. I thus asked for information on the number of dependents under 18 removed each year, with a breakdown by age from 2002(the year from which such data is available). These figures indicate a considerable decrease in the ratio of children removed between 2002 and 2008 – from a peak of 19.2 percent in 2003 to 4.9 percent in 2008 (see Appendix 1). By contrast, the number of asylum dependents arriving with an adult applicant has remained remarkably constant between 2002 and 2008 at an average of 17% (Home Office, 2009). Such a decrease in child removals suggests that families with children in England are, contrary to Crawley and Lester's (2005) suggestion, less likely to be targeted for removal than others.

Literature on ‘non-status’ children

In recent years, in light of the restrictive policy context affecting this group of children in France and England, researchers have investigated the impact of state policies and practices on their well-being. Also, studies by education and social work researchers have focused on children’s experience of schooling and of the child protection system, as well as on frontline workers’ (teachers, social workers) reactions. This field is largely dominated by social work and policy based research on unaccompanied minors. By comparison, little has been written on children in families. The literature on the aforementioned issues is considerably more developed in Britain than in France. Finally, the academic literature on migrant mobilisations, principally written by ‘mainstream’ sociologists, that is, those whose analysis is not influenced by the field of childhood studies, has tended to uncritically subsume acts of support for undocumented migrants’ children or rejected asylum-seekers’ children within wider mobilisations in support of ‘non-status’ migrants. We will discuss these issues in turn.

Research on the impact of state policies and practices

Numerous authors in France and Britain have documented the tension at stake between immigration enforcement and welfare protection concerns (Bhabha, 2001; Bourgeois, 2004; Jovelin, 2007). Research on the issue tends to rely heavily on policies and practices in Britain, where the literature points to the increasing discrepancy between the legislation developed to protect children – the Children Acts 1989 and 2004, the ‘Every Child Matters’ framework and the agenda to eradicate child poverty – and the actual

situation of children affected by immigration controls (Crawley, 2004, 2006; Dobrowolsky and Lister, 2005; Dunkerley et al., 2005; Fitzpatrick, 2005; Giner, 2006, 2007; Jones, 1998, 2002). On this issue, policy-based research undertaken by children's NGOs has intended to provide practical examples of such conflict between child welfare and asylum law. British NGOs, in particular member organisations of the Refugee Children's Consortium (RCC) (Giner, 2007), have regularly released research-based reports on asylum-seeking and refugee children in the last ten years. Report titles as listed below indicate a strong focus on presenting the asylum-seeking child as a 'child first and foremost':

- *Like any other Child? Children and Families in the asylum process* (Barnardo's) (Reacroft, 2008)
- *Does every child matter? Children seeking asylum in Britain* (Refugee and Migrant Justice, 2010)
- *No place for a Child: Children in UK immigration detention: Impacts, alternatives and safeguards* (Save the Children) (Crawley and Lester, 2005)
- *Child first, Migrant Second: Ensuring that every child matters* (Immigration Law Practitioners' Association) (Crawley, 2006)

Refugee and children's organisations alike thus used research as a lobbying tool to remind the State of its commitment to all children, including 'non-status' children. As argued by Wiegers (2002), while policy-based research can represent a response to shifts in policy discourse and orientation, it can also contribute to setting a new political agenda by prioritising issues and highlighting new orientations. In other fields of research, some researchers

deplored that such agenda-setting literature might silence information that does not fit the agenda set by these organisations (Dobrowolsky and Saint-Martin, 2005; Juhem, 2004).

In France, the agenda-setting role of NGO publications has been less obvious than in Britain. Organisations such as the GISTI or Cimade have coordinated publications on sans papiers' children's access to school (Gisti, 2005) or the exceptional regularisation (Cimade, 2007). In its publications on detention, the Cimade (2008) widely discussed the situation of detained children. Similarly, the Réseau Education sans Frontières (RESF), which features prominently as a social movement organisation in this thesis, has contributed to producing literature on sans papiers' children and RESF (Fishman and Fournier, 2008).

Literature on interactions between 'non-status' children and 'frontline' workers

Studies by education and social work researchers have focused on children's experience of schooling and of the child protection system as well as on frontline workers' reactions. However, French literature on the issue remains scarce as compared to Britain. Furthermore, the literature is largely dominated by research on unaccompanied minors (Humphries, 2004; Jones, 2002; Kohli, 2006a, 2006b, 2007). By comparison, little has been written on children in families³⁷.

Of interest for this thesis is the literature relating to frontline workers' work with asylum-seeking children and young people. As argued by Lipsky

³⁷ However, a new project on the experiences of undocumented migrant children in the UK has been launched at the University of Oxford.

(1980), the activities of 'street-level bureaucrats' (teachers, social workers, lawyers) are especially interesting for their decisions and convictions directly impact on the public policy that they are asked to implement. According to Moreno Fuentes (2005), front-line workers have been increasingly put in a difficult situation with regard to their work with migrants.

The reviewed literature in both France and Britain points to the crucial importance of education for young people affected by immigration controls (Barou, 2004; Christie and Sidhu, 2006; Goï, 2005; Hek, 2005b; Hek and Sales, 2004; Kidane, 2001; Marriott, 2001; Rutter, 2006). Researchers refer to the role of the 'model pupil' that many asylum-seekers come to play at school, mainly explained by their strong commitment to education, their determination to succeed and their very positive image of the educational system in the host country (Reakes and Powell, 2004; Rutter and Jones, 1998; Schiff, 2007; Stead et al., 2002; Wade et al., 2005).

Furthermore, schools might often be the only statutory agency involved with and offering formal and emotional support to these children (Barou, 2004: 64; Candappa, 2000; Hek, 2005b). According to Beirens et al. (2007: 225), 'schools and after-school clubs constitute key settings in which refugee and asylum seeking children and young people are able to develop social bridges', while teachers and education support workers constitute a 'key source of care' (Stanley, 2001: 83). This applies especially to unaccompanied asylum-seeking children, for whom teachers may sometimes act as 'surrogate parents' (Kohli, 2006a). In Britain, recent studies point to the increased importance that school has taken for children and parents since the introduction of dispersal in 2000, which has considerably reduced the

opportunities for asylum-seekers to rely upon religious, ethnic or national community links³⁸ (Arnot and Pinson, 2005; Beirens et al., 2006; Candappa, 2000). School thereby provides the opportunity to partly break away from the isolation characteristic of 'non-status' migrants' lives, fostering the conditions for settlement in the host community and contributing to a sense of belonging (Kidane, 2001; Richman, 1998; Save the Children, 2004).

However, commentators have also documented negative reactions among frontline workers and more widely within society. They highlight considerable differences between schools in that regard and attribute it to the specific local context, place of habitation and experience with migration (Candappa and Egharevba, 2000; Macaskill and Petrie, 2000; Schiff, 2007). The arrival of asylum-seeking children in UK schools, in particular following the introduction of dispersal in 2000, has presented significant challenges to staff, pupils and families (Arnot and Pinson, 2005; Whiteman, 2005). Indeed, most of these schools, located in traditionally ethnically-homogenous areas, had had no previous experience with asylum-seeking children (Ofsted, 2003) and were not prepared to cater for their educational or psychological needs (Arnot and Pinson, 2005; Audit Commission, 2000; Candappa, 2000). In some cases, schools refused to accept asylum-seeking children due to a lack of financial support or fear that it would impact on their results (Audit Commission, 2000).

In France, I am not aware of any research on the education of children of irregular migrants specifically. Cortes-Diaz (2005) documents some

³⁸ The 1999 Asylum and Immigration Act introduced a 'no-choice' dispersal scheme to relieve housing demand pressure on the South East and London, where the majority of asylum-seekers and refugees had previously settled. From then on, all asylum-seekers, besides unaccompanied minors, were to be dispersed in northern parts of the country, including Scotland and Wales.

Mairies' exclusionary practices against the school registration of undocumented migrants' children³⁹. These practices directly contravened the circular of 16 July 1984 which delinked school registration from status. Cortes-Diaz (2005) accordingly argues that despite being enshrined in international and domestic law, the right to education for all remains contested by some local authorities and representatives of the French Department for Education.

In Britain, numerous studies on young asylum-seekers found that some of them experienced bullying and racism at school (Candappa, 2000; Candappa and Egharevba, 2000; Reakes and Powell, 2004; Stead et al., 2002; Wade et al., 2005). These attacks tend to be regarded as highly correlated with the negative portrayal of immigrants and asylum-seekers in political and public discourses (Arnot and Pinson, 2005; Candappa and Egharevba, 2000; Whiteman, 2005). In dispersal areas, young asylum-seekers appear at increased risk of being victim of hostility and xenophobic attacks. With regard to France, Schiff's (2004, 2007) studies on newly arrived children show that some of these children and young people perceive themselves as victims of other pupils' or of institutionalised racism. However, the reviewed literature shows that instances of racism and segregation are likely to be mitigated if the school adopts a 'pro-refugee' or anti-racist stance that raises awareness of asylum-seeking children's problems, counteract negative images, and demonstrates respect for parents (Jones, 1998;

³⁹ The French Ministry of Education, under a socialist government, published a circular in 2002 on modalities of registration and schooling of foreign children in primary and secondary schools. It made clear that "it is not the role of the Ministry of National Education to control the regularity of the situation of foreign children and their parents with regard to the rules governing their entry and stay in France [...]. As a consequence, registration of a foreign child in a school institution, whatever his age, cannot be subordinated to the presentation of a leave to remain" (Ministère de l'Education Nationale, 2002).

Reakes and Powell, 2004) (Arnot and Pinson, 2005; Giner and Mangado, 2007; Hek, 2005a, 2005b; Macaskill and Petrie, 2000; Parker Jenkins et al., 2005; Pinson and Arnot, 2010).

However, according to Pinson and Arnot (2007: 403), 'such a model is not sufficient ... to tackle the often oppressive and destructive ways in which these children and not only their needs, but also their rights, are constructed within the state'. An increasing number of researchers thus advocate for educational practices that go beyond psychological discourses pathologising and victimising young asylum-seekers to actually tackle the political tensions that surround the education of asylum-seeking children (Pinson and Arnot, 2007; Pinson et al., 2010; Rutter, 2006). They therefore suggest that teachers develop new strategies to cope with as well as react to the changes they are faced with. With regard to educational practices with asylum-seeking children in Australia, Christie and Sidhu (2006) similarly call for a new conception of the role of educators. They invite teachers and educational workers to 'speak back' against the normalisation of illiberal practices in accordance with Foucault's theorisation of Parrhesia (2001). Closely linked to the idea of civil disobedience, the concept of Parrhesia was developed by Foucault to describe the idea of 'talking back' to the 'powerful' at some risk to oneself in order to resist the dominant 'governmentality'. According to Christie and Sidhu (2006), educators, known as those who know the truth and convey it, have a civic responsibility to intervene against illiberal practices affecting asylum-seeking children. Educational researchers have called upon teachers to adopt a new role towards 'non-status' migrant children by questioning and challenging 'the assumptions and practices of

governments about refugees and asylum-seekers and the education of their children' (Christie and Sidhu, 2006: 463), a role that this thesis aims to investigate.

However, as of now, little published research has investigated such ethically informed reaction among teachers (Hek, 2005b). Candappa and Egharevba (2000) briefly refer to instances of teachers attempting to challenge state decisions. Cohen (2001) mentions that schools can be the base for some community campaigns against deportation. With regard to France, recent studies have referred to the increase in school-based mobilisations against the removal of children of undocumented migrants (Benassayag and Del Rey, 2008; Carrère, 2006; de Blic and de Blic, 2006; Fekete, 2007; Gintzburger, 2006; Martini, 2005). Fekete (2007) and Hintjens (2006) refer to recent cases of school-based mobilisations in Scotland, an area of dispersal, against the removal of rejected asylum-seekers and their children. However, none of these publications are based on in-depth academic research, instead resorting to journalistic, literary or activist reporting styles, though still providing interesting insight into these particular forms of mobilisations.

The literature on social workers' activities and reactions towards 'non-status' children was also reviewed for the purpose of the literature review. However, social workers' relative absence from the analysis of political claims (Chapter 4) meant that I only interviewed three social workers. Their absence as claims-makers might result from their limited involvement in grassroots mobilisations, as compared to day-to-day work with 'non-status'

children⁴⁰. I briefly review, however, some of the key issues raised by social workers' activities. In Britain, numerous researchers have noted and/or openly criticised the absence among social workers of 'critical scrutiny' towards government's practices affecting asylum-seeking children (Cemlyn and Briskman, 2003; Christie, 2002; Humphries, 2004; Jones, 2001, 2002). However, recent studies present a more nuanced picture of social workers dealing with asylum-seekers, with a particular research focus on unaccompanied minors. As a whole, what appears from the more recent studies such as Kohli's (2006a, 2007) is that numerous social workers deplore the ambiguity of the expectations imposed upon them (that is, protecting children at risk, while taking part in exclusionary practices). In both France and Britain, recent legislation is regarded by numerous social workers as compromising some of the basic principles of their professional practice and ethics (Becquemin, 2005; Dunkerley et al., 2005; Kohli, 2007). The position in which social workers are put provokes anxiety, frustration and dissatisfaction (Dunkerley et al., 2005).

The issue of professional ethics and deontology apparently plays a crucial role in spurring 'street-level bureaucrats' into action. The feeling that one's professional principles and deontological values are compromised might act as a justification for resorting to civil disobedience or campaigning activities. Increasingly restrictive migration and asylum laws have apparently had an impact in both France and Britain, either on actors in the field or on educational/social work researchers. Despite an increased documentation of

⁴⁰ Discussions with social workers in England and France precisely suggests that social workers focus primarily on helping children and young people in their day-to-day activities, and might thus act as intermediaries between them and campaigners, if young people are threatened with removal.

instances of ethical subversion and campaigning activities of ‘street-level bureaucrats’, the information gathered on these issues in both France and Britain remains scarce and anecdotal.

Marginal consideration of children and childhood in the literature on migrant mobilisations and strategies

In this section, I review the literature on pro-migrant mobilisations and draw on authors’ understandings of the potential role of children and childhood within these mobilisations.

My review suggests that the academic literature has tended to ignore the specificities of mobilisations in support of ‘non-status’ children and assumed that these mobilisations were simply part of a wider movement of support for non-status migrants. Scholars refer to instances of strong mobilisation in support of migrant children and their families as examples of what, in their opinion, constitute civil society’s expression of compassion for migrants and asylum seekers: e.g. for an Algerian family in Canada (Lowry and Nyers, 2003; Nyers, 2006), for Portuguese families (Gastaut, 2000: 95) or ‘sans papiers’ mothers (Lloyd, 2003) in France, or asylum-seeking families in Scotland (Hintjens, 2006). These authors are to a certain extent representative of a tendency among researchers, the press and civil-society actors to take the example of advocacy campaigns in support of ‘non-status’ children to make a point about the (re-)emergence of a wider movement of resistance against restrictive migration and asylum policies. However, the literature acknowledges that, in a highly constrained context, a powerful

strategy has been to refer to the figure of the child as a way to mobilise actors or to resist removals (Bhattacharyya and Gabriel, 2002; Blin, 2005; Cohen, 2001: 138; Thomas, 2006). Blin (2005: 100) argues that the symbolic strength of the 'sans papiers' movement is to have managed to bring forward cases of families, whereas before the categories most represented were these of failed asylum seekers or single undocumented migrants. However, such a strategy also has ambiguities. Blin (2005) points out the relative weakness of this strategy in that it is only truly successful if the government accepts to enter a logic of large-scale regularisation, thus benefiting all undocumented migrants. Commentators have argued that the process of representations of the child, the mother or the 'sick person' may have the detrimental effect of 'dehumanising' the person represented (Cohen, 2001; Fassin, 2001; Jones, 1998; Ticktin, 2005). What is contested is the use by campaigners of undesirable human conditions becoming, for the purpose of anti-deportation campaigns, positive attributes in contesting removal (Fassin, 2001, 2005; Ticktin, 2005).

While the literature acknowledges campaigners' awareness of the resonance of child-centred claims, it does not consider the extent to which the child might also constitute a mobilising ground for campaigners. Historically, however, we can find in both countries examples of spontaneous support for children at risk because of their ethnic or religious origin. In France, during the Second World War, French families accepted to hide Jewish children to prevent them from being sent to concentration camps (Hazan and Weill, 2008; Mouchenik, 2006; Natanson, 2008). In Britain, the Refugee Children's Movement organised in 1938/1939 the transport of

10,000 Jewish children from Germany to Britain (Kindertransport), leaving their parents behind, which many of them never saw again (Harris and Oppenheimer, 2000). In both cases, children were welcomed by volunteering host families, most of them Christian and living in rural areas (Oldfield, 2004)⁴¹.

Overall, it appears that despite a rapidly developing body of literature on policies and practices affecting 'non-status' children, and despite restrictive migration and asylum policies reinforcing the risks of deportation, no academic research has been dedicated to the issue of mobilisations against child deportations.

Conclusions and research questions

This chapter has identified gaps in the literature with regard to mobilisations in support of 'non-status' children. Based on the review of the literature on child-centred and pro-migrant mobilisations, one is left to wonder how and why grassroots mobilisations against child and family deportations organise, make claims and secure support. Oscillations between restrictive policies and policy openings relating to 'non-status' children in France and England might furthermore provide favourable grounds for campaigning, though restrictions might adversely affect campaigns. An in-depth investigation is therefore needed to shed light on these processes.

The following questions help guide my investigation:

⁴¹ Authors refer to placement difficulties for teenage boys in Britain, since host families preferred younger children, in particular girls. This example also points to the limits of good will and altruism.

- Who are the actors/organisations supporting 'non-status' children?
- What are individual reasons for mobilising and sustaining involvement and the proposed solutions to the problem?
- What are the actions and practices favoured by the actors involved?
- What are the main frames of argumentation?

I will answer these questions in turn within the following analytical chapters. Moreover, I explore three main complementary research questions that run through the entire analysis:

- How does the 'child variable' influence mobilisations, in terms of the actors involved, the reasons for involvement, and framing activities?
- How do national contexts affect campaigning activities?
- To what type of social movement do these mobilisations belong?

Before beginning to answer these questions, I outline the research design and methods used in the following chapter.

Chapter Three: Research Design, Methods and Ethics

This thesis investigates a little researched area: grassroots mobilisations against child deportations in France and England. In Chapter 2, I developed a theoretical framework aiming to take into account the conditions of emergence and development of social mobilisations (political opportunities), the structures and resources facilitating involvement (resource mobilisation), individual campaigners' reasons and justifications for their involvement and the strategic work they carry out to mobilise bystanders. It was therefore crucial to design methods that would both preliminarily map the field of contention and the context in which mobilisations arise, and investigate to greater length the specificities of such mobilisations, with regard to recruitment patterns, reasons for involvement and tactics devised by campaigners in both countries. This chapter sets out the research design and the methods devised to best answer the breadth of these research objectives. This research adopts a primarily qualitative approach based on in-depth interviews, which follow a preliminary quantitative data collection.

This chapter thus explains the choices of research methodology and describes the research process from designing research methods to analysing the data. In particular, it discusses the comparative dimension of this project, the reasons for choosing a multi-methods strategy and its

implications, and issues such as sampling and access to participants. It also highlights ethical issues relevant to my research.

3.1 Research design and choice of methodology

Before discussing the specificities of my research methodology, it is important to discuss why a comparative research design was adopted.

A comparative research design

This study investigates social mobilisations and instances of collective action in support of 'non-status' children and families in France and England. The decision to undertake comparative research was based on the results of preliminary research carried out separately in Britain (Giner, 2007) and France (Giner and Mangado, 2007). Both studies suggested that the question of 'non-status' children had become a 'social problem', which was, however, dealt with in a different manner in each country. I was convinced that an explicit comparison would provide interesting results which single country research would not have uncovered. Such a comparative approach has been advocated by numerous social movement researchers (della Porta, 1995, 2002; Klandermans et al., 2002; Meyer, 2004). Meyer (2004) argues that the study of social movements and collective action has much to benefit from explicit comparisons across different contexts. More specifically, comparative research enables researchers to pay attention to the macro conditions for the development of protest, while still resorting to in-depth

research to understand the microdynamics of collective action (della Porta, 2002: 290; Klandermans et al., 2002).

I have opted for a ‘most-similar systems design’ – as compared to a ‘most different systems design’ – which aims to control as large a number of explanatory variables as possible, while looking for differences and concordances between mobilisation patterns in the compared cases (della Porta, 1995, 2002; Dogan and Pelassy, 1990; Lijphart, 1975). The overall objective of such methodology is to understand ‘a complex unity rather than to establish relationships between variables’ (della Porta, 1995: 15). I furthermore opted for a comparison between two countries for it enabled me to undertake in-depth research in both countries, which any larger number of countries would have impeded. To that end, it was important to select two countries similar on many accounts, so as to reduce the range of explanatory variables in the process of comparison. With this aim in mind I selected England⁴² and France as ideal candidates for such cross-national comparison.

England and France share many similarities. Two pluralist liberal Western-European democracies, they have been marked by their colonial past and their strong Judeo-Christian heritage. They have also both ratified the main Human Rights conventions.

Migration patterns in both France and England have been largely influenced by each country’s past colonial involvement. In recent years, both

⁴² England, as a country part of the UK, was selected as opposed to the whole of the UK, because it reduced the range of variables for the purpose of analysis. In particular, this implied that Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, would not be included in the analysis. Migration and asylum policies are not devolved matters. However, education and child welfare are. Furthermore, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland are each marked by strong feelings of national identity. Based on preliminary research, I came to the conclusion that results were likely to be influenced by such particularities, which would have transformed the study into a multi-cases comparison.

countries have expressed the will to restrict 'unwanted' migrant children's and families' rights, while aiming to 'better' integrate long-term residents and take advantage of highly-skilled migration. Faced with a so-called 'integration crisis', both France and England have tended to refine their diverging models of integration (management of 'race relations' and 'multiculturalism' in England, universalistic 'assimilationism' in France) towards a definition of migrants' rights and duties and of the society's capacity to integrate (Joppke, 2007). With regard to the other variable in the analysis – children and childhood – both countries have shown a strong commitment to providing a universal access to education, health and welfare to all children on their territory since the end of the nineteenth century.

However, there are important differences that might contribute to enriching the results of the comparative research. First, even though state integration policies have become increasingly similar, each country's specific model of integration still shapes national debates relating to how society should deal with migrants (Favell, 2001; Koopmans et al., 2005). Second, the worldviews on which political action is based and the justifications for policy choices in each country continue to differ. In France, the Constitution and the universalist principles it enshrines – Liberty, Equality, Fraternity – constitute key pillars of French citizens' worldviews. In England, such universalist principles are rarely called upon. By contrast, English political tradition has been characterised by a pragmatist approach to social problems, with a focus on community-based solutions to minority issues (Weil and Crowley, 1994). Finally, the decision-making process on foreigners' right to remain on the territory differs considerably between France and England. In England, the

centrally organised UK Border Agency, an agency of the Home Office, is the institution in charge of handling applications to obtain leave to remain. By contrast, in France, decisions on migrant's stay in the country are taken locally at the level of the prefectures.

These similarities and differences between France and England make comparison particularly interesting. Such comparative analysis remain nonetheless limited to the extent that it cannot go beyond 'middle-range' theories - that is, theories that apply only to a restricted range of phenomena (della Porta, 2002). However, as argued by Bryman (2004: 53), 'we can understand social phenomena better when they are compared in relation to two or more meaningfully contrasting cases'. Adopting a comparative research design thus allows me to better comprehend the multiple influences impacting on grassroots mobilisations against child deportations, according in particular to the national context in which they are situated.

A qualitative research strategy and justification for methodology

For the purpose of this doctoral thesis, I opted for both quantitative and qualitative approaches to data collection (Bryman, 2004, 2006; della Porta and Caiani, 2006) (Deacon et al., 1998) in order to maximise the breadth and depth of my results. The study is nonetheless clearly qualitative in scope, as qualitative methods, in particular in-depth interviews, constitute the principal data-gathering tool. However, this thesis has largely benefited from a preliminary quantitative data collection. In order to map the field of contention at national level, I indeed undertook a political claims-making analysis

(Koopmans and Statham, 1999, 2000c; Statham, 2001) (see next section). The knowledge provided by the quantitative study had a 'development' function (Greene et al., 1989), as it contributed to developing and informing the qualitative method including the selection of sites and respondents, and the design of the topic guide for interviews, as well as providing a better understanding of the context (for a similar case see Deacon et al. (1998)).

The overall strategy is qualitative in scope since my main research interest lies in actors' constructions and interpretations of their social world (Silverman, 2001). My epistemological position is interpretivist to the extent that 'the stress is on the understanding of the social world through an examination of the interpretation of that world by its participants' (Bryman, 2004: 266). I locate my research within the constructivist field since I consider that actors' opinions and ideas are based on their own constructions of reality and should not be analysed according to one single definition of truth. I will now turn to the specificities of my research methods.

3.2 Collecting the data

Besides documentary sources used to complement the research project, my methodology rests on two main methods: (a) a political claims-making analysis and (b) semi-structured in-depth interviews

Political claims-making analysis

As explained earlier, the research process was divided into different steps, starting with the analysis of claims-making activities in both France and Britain.

A preliminary analysis was required to map the field of political contention relating to 'non-status' children in France and Britain. In the next chapter, I therefore apply a method informed by protest-event analysis (Earl et al., 2004; Koopmans and Rucht, 2002) as developed by researchers involved in the 'Mobilization on Ethnic Relations, Citizenship and Immigration' (MERCi) project.⁴³ The group of researchers involved in this internationally comparative project wished to move beyond the conventional protest-event analysis, which remains centred on protest actions without paying attention to the discursive dimensions of collective action (Koopmans and Rucht, 2002; Koopmans and Statham, 2000a, 2000b). The method thus advocated by the authors integrates the quantitative analysis of protest events and the qualitative analysis of political discourse (Koopmans and Rucht, 2002; Koopmans and Statham, 1999).

The units coded and analysed are instances of claims-making on 'non-status' children and young people, that is, children with no long-term right to remain in the country. All acts of collective action as discussed in newspapers, whether protests or discursive actions, are considered as claims for the purpose of the analysis. These range from hunger strikes and building occupations to press conferences and public statements. Though

⁴³ Information on the MERCi project can be accessed at the following website: http://www.eurpolcom.eu/research_projects_merci.cfm, [last accessed 26th April 2010].

criticised for its too systematic approach to social movements,⁴⁴ the political claims analysis method provides a useful tool to analyse social mobilisations in relation to the policy context in which they are situated.

The core data has been retrieved from *Le Monde* (France) and *The Guardian* (England).⁴⁵ *Le Monde* and *The Guardian* are both 'broadsheet' newspapers and are of similar political affiliation (centre-left). Using data from broadsheet newspapers gives a good indication of how social problems evolve in each country, and provides interesting grounds for comparison. The sample is based on articles published between 2000 and 2007. I selected specific keywords in French and English for the search on Lexis Nexis (see Appendix 2). A high number of articles appeared repeatedly, but the nuances in the use of the keywords enabled me to be as exhaustive as possible in the data collection. A valence score has been attributed to each claim, under the model of the MERCI project: -1 for a statement entirely negative towards 'non-status' children, +1 for a statement entirely positive, 0 for a neutral or ambivalent claim.

Instances of claims-making relating to 'non-status' foreign minors are varied. They exclude, however, any political claim relating to young migrants of the 2nd and 3rd generation, the young of the banlieues in France or inner-city youth in England, unless a direct parallel or link is drawn between these groups and our group of interest. Similarly, protest actions undertaken by 'non-status' actors that do not refer to, or that take place in the absence of, children or young people (therefore not retrieved during the search) have not

⁴⁴ See Royall (2007) for a discussion of the advantages/disadvantages of this method.

⁴⁵ In order to check for any bias caused by the newspaper source, I also applied this methodology to articles in *Le Figaro* (France) and *The Times* (Britain) for the period 2000–07. No significant difference was noted.

been coded. The aim was precisely to consider the issue-field of 'non-status' children (and their families) in its individuality.

Using the methods set up by the MERCI researchers, I produced a new data-set on political claims-making on 'non-status' children in France and England from 2000 to 2007. Overall, I coded 663 claims made by collective actors in France and 609 in England for the period between 2000 and 2007. These claims were analysed using the statistical software SPSS for the quantitative data and the qualitative data analysis software Nvivo for the analysis of the content of claims. This enabled me to map in-depth the field of contention relating to 'non-status' children in France and England. In particular, I identified the actors making claims on the issue as reported in newspapers and was able to analyse the main forms of collective action and targets of mobilisation. Furthermore, I was able to study the ways in which issues are presented in the public space. The qualitative analysis of claims shed light on the main frames of argumentation developed by leading organisations, as well as the audience they targeted and the solutions they proposed. This provided the opportunity to understand the terms of the debate in both countries, as they are construed in quality newspapers in France and England.

Semi-structured interviews

Following the political claims-making analysis, I opted for semi-structured in-depth interviews as the main technique for the qualitative study, since my research interest lies in the experience, social construction of reality and

reasons for involvement of actors involved in the defence of 'non-status' children (Benford, 1997). As argued by Blee and Taylor (2002: 92), 'interviews have always been central to social movement research as a means of generating data about the motives of people who participate in protest and the activities of social movement networks and organizations'. This technique is therefore particularly adapted to the study of activists' agency (Touraine, 1981).

Interviews furthermore provide the opportunity to gain access to the motivations and perspectives of a *broader* and *more diverse* group of social movement participants than would be represented in most documentary sources (Blee and Taylor, 2002; Bryman, 2004). Similarly, though participant observation (PO) offers great advantages, some issues remain resistant to observation, in particular those regarding the reasons for involvement of actors and past involvements. Furthermore, it was also important to me not to intrude into participants' lives over a long period of time, as I gathered that such introspection had a strong emotional impact on participants. The image of a 'bubble' describes well the time spent with participants during the interviews, which PO might have altered. Finally, semi-structured interviews were favoured over focus groups for two reasons. First, given participants' involvement in campaigning activities, their 'free' time was filled with several commitments. It would have been particularly difficult to find a suitable time to fit a focus group. Second, the issues discussed during interviews raised aspects that were highly personal and emotional to interviewees, and I felt that focus groups did not provide the most adapted setting to discussing such personal issues.

Overall, from March 2008 to June 2009, I interviewed sixty-five participants, all having demonstrated some commitment to the cause of 'non-status' children.

Selection of respondents

The political claims-making analysis allowed me to identify the organisations, groups and networks advocating for foreign minors. This preliminary analysis highlighted the importance of 'micromobilisation contexts' (McAdam, 1988: 709) in both countries. It is the multiplication of these micromobilisations that has led to the development of the vocal RESF network based on over 200 national and local civil-society organisations, groups and trade unions, advocating at the macro-level. In England, actions at the micro-level to prevent the removal of failed asylum-seeking children have increasingly taken place since the 1990s, without, however, developing into an influential national network⁴⁶. Meanwhile, at the national level, the main refugee organisations and children's charities⁴⁷ have come together to create the Refugee Children's Consortium in 1998, a group involved in lobbying the UK Parliament and Government. Given the specific contexts highlighted in each country, it was therefore neither desirable nor possible to draw an exactly matching sample of individual and group interviewees.

With regard to the selection of interviewees, I therefore resorted to a purposive theoretical sampling, which, as argued by Bryman (2004: 333) is 'essentially strategic and entails an attempt to establish a good

⁴⁶ The reasons for the absence of such network will be discussed in Chapter 5.

⁴⁷ Refugee Council, Save the Children, NSPCC, the Children's Society, etc.), as well as the British Association of Social Workers (BASW)

correspondence between research questions and sampling.’ Rather than aiming to select a representative sample allowing for generalisation to a larger population, my interest lay in getting cases ‘rich’ in data pertinent to answering my research questions. To that end, I decided to select individuals based on the particular experiences they had had in social mobilisations, such as different degrees of involvement in support of ‘non-status’ children or their past as activists in different local contexts (Blee and Taylor, 2002).

To be included in this sample, participants therefore had to correspond to the following criteria derived from the research objectives:

- They were campaigners over 16 years of age involved in advocating for and defending ‘non-status’ children
- They were **EITHER** involved in coordinating campaigning activities at the macro- , meso- or the micro level **OR** taking part in activities as followers in groups or networks having been mobilised at the micro-level (so-called ‘rank-and-files’ supporters)

Within my sample, the overwhelming majority of interviewees were involved to some extent in coordinating campaigning activities. There are different explanations for this fact. First, in such ‘open’ and loose grassroots settings, campaigners insisted on sharing responsibilities. This contrasts with more traditional political structures, which have a clear hierarchical structure. Second, as I show in Chapter 8, movement practices were particularly varied, which meant that different campaigners could potentially work on different aspects. Third, it is possible that the nature of the sample technique over-represented those with coordinating responsibilities.

I carried out six individual interviews in each country with key informants or actors involved at the macro-level, that is, those actors with insider understandings and expert knowledge of the movements and mobilisations (Lofland and Lofland, 1995). In most instances, these were social movement entrepreneurs involved at national level who had been identified during the political claims-making analysis for they were repeatedly quoted as ‘spokesperson’ or ‘leader’ in newspapers’ reports. These interviews enabled me to obtain information ‘pertaining to organisational considerations, such as movement’s structure, strategies and culture’ (Blee and Taylor, 2002: 105) and the overall dynamics of mobilisation. In both countries, I asked my key informants who they thought were important decisions-makers not to overlook. In some instances participants were interviewed both as informants and respondents and in that case, as advised in Blee and Taylor (2002), I grouped questions in the interview guide according to the role of the interviewee. In France, the key informant interviews took place with individuals identified in newspapers and reports as spokespeople of RESF. Some of these key informants were, however, reluctant to be considered as spokespeople, which in their opinion contradicted RESF’s stance as a non-hierarchical structure. They did nonetheless acknowledge their role as coordinators and representatives of RESF to the public. In England, key informant interviews included interviews with representatives of the main organisations involved in the RCC – Save the Children⁴⁸, the Children’s Society, the Refugee Council and the British Association of Social Workers

⁴⁸ In 2008, Save the Children decided to stop campaigning on issues relating to refugee children, preferring instead to concentrate its resources on child poverty.

(BASW) - as well as other actors, such as the Institute of Race Relations and experts identified in the literature.

The majority of interviewees – fifty-three in total – were actors involved at the micro- and meso-level in two main areas in each country: Paris and Lyon and its surroundings in France and London and the greater Manchester area in England. The rationale for a multi-location approach lay in the will not to focus solely on the capital cities of France and Britain. All four areas are densely populated regions and important industrial poles. However, London and Paris are both core regions, while Manchester and Lyon represent peripheral regions as a result of their geographical situation. Both Paris and London are the primary location of asylum-seekers and sans-papiers in respectively England and France. Manchester and Lyon, as acknowledged in previous research (Bourgeois et al., 2004; Findlay et al., 2007), are also traditional regions of settlement for immigrant communities. However, they have also been confronted with more recent arrivals of migrants in the frame of the dispersal scheme in the Manchester area (Findlay et al., 2007) and because of Lyon's attractive and strategic position next to the Mediterranean, Italy, Switzerland and Germany (Bourgeois et al., 2004). Finally, I felt that it was important to move away from the capital cities which have been longstanding stages of all kinds of social mobilisations. I limited myself to two areas in each country because of time constraints.

To identify and secure access to participants involved at the local level, I first undertook a partial analysis of local newspapers (*Le Parisien* for Paris, *Le Progrès* for Lyon, *The Manchester Evening News* and *The Bolton News* for the Greater Manchester Area and *The Evening Standard* for London), as

undertaken in other studies (Cress and Snow, 1996). This preliminary investigation enabled me to identify the main forms of action and the main actors and organisations. In a second step, I contacted and interviewed those that I identified as local social movement entrepreneurs whose expertise helped me better comprehend the local context and the overall dynamics of mobilisation. I also subscribed to local mailing lists on the issue which helped me to keep in touch with local events, in particular meetings and gatherings. I took part in numerous meetings and collective actions when they occurred, which allowed me to meet social movement actors who had different levels of involvement. During our first encounter, I briefly explained what my research was about and how I was going to collect data. Despite first reactions such as ‘but I’m not at all a specialist’ or ‘I’m not a hard-cord activist’, they accepted to give me their contact details so I could send them my introductory email.

Depending on the local context, these actors were teachers, social workers, mayors, young people or pupils’ parents (see Appendix 3 for a complete anonymised list). Four of the interviewees were themselves threatened with deportation. These interviews allowed me to gather information on actors’ participation in social mobilisations, their reasons for involvement, core sets of beliefs, understandings of society, personal interests, values and previous instances of civil or political involvement. Campaigning groups investigated were active in widely differing local contexts in both France and England. When selecting sites, I made sure to diversify sites based on specific criteria: urban or rural, long-term or recent presence of immigrant populations, socio-economically advantaged or

disadvantaged areas, areas of longstanding political mobilisations or with little political history. This allowed me to get some insight into the influence of the local context in terms of mobilisations.

In total, I interviewed 35 actors in France and 30 in England. The rate of non-participation was very low: only four actors did not reply to my introductory email. I have been very positively surprised by informants' and participants' willingness to give time for my research. I see three explanations for such readiness to take part in this study. First, actors were generally glad to share what they considered was a morally and politically necessary action. In France in particular, campaigners were convinced that any cooperation with external actors would 'further the cause', which Hek also found in her research (2005b). A second reason, often only mentioned by participants *a posteriori*, related to the opportunity to share with someone their day-to-day activities, which they rarely had the opportunity to do. Finally, participation was often implicitly conditional on the assurance that I would transmit and publicise results upon completion of my research. In particular, French and English campaigners showed great interest in gaining more information on what was happening on the other side of the Channel.

While conducting, transcribing and analysing interviews, I paid attention to the range of experiences that I was studying, and identified obvious gaps with regard to the type of respondents that I was interviewing. As argued by numerous researchers (Blee and Taylor, 2002; Bryman, 2004; Seale and Silverman, 1997), resorting to a purposive sample requires the researcher to sharpen his/her reflections and accepts the idea of sampling in stages based upon knowledge acquired in the course of the fieldwork. In both countries, I

therefore conducted interviews up to the point where I felt that my categories were ‘theoretically saturated’, that is, that no new relevant data seemed to emerge (Bryman, 2004; Glaser and Strauss, 1967). This constant striving for completeness counterbalances a common criticism of purposive sampling techniques, that is, the fact that one is likely to overweight subgroups in the population that are more readily accessible due, for instance, to their high involvement.

The Interview process

As a first step to negotiating access, I sent potential participants an informative email sometime after a first physical encounter. I decided not to contact participants by phone in order to leave them the opportunity to think first before accepting or refusing. The email provided the following information: Personal information and CV, information regarding the topic of the research, interview procedures and time commitment, the potential benefits of the study, anonymity and confidentiality of statement.

To ensure full transparency, I made sure to restate all the important facts before starting the interview. I introduced myself in more detail, including a partial description of my own activism (this is discussed further in the ethics section). I explained the research topic, the purposes of the research and the intended use of the data. Participants were reassured that the interviews would remain anonymous and that they would not be identified in any way. Discussing experiences of activism can be upsetting, and it was important to me that participants were fully informed about the nature of the

project and of their right to withhold consent to participation. I asked participants for their permission to record the interview, explaining that they could go 'off the record' whenever they felt the need for it. This short discussion before starting the interview enabled me to establish rapport with participants (Hannabuss, 1996).

The majority of interviews took place as one-on-one face-to-face semi-structured interviews. Interviews consisted of broad and general open-ended questions that allowed follow-up questions and probing. The questions covered broad areas such as recruitment and settlement into mobilisation, personal reasons for and objectives of involvement, implication of involvement, and past involvements. During interviews, I relied on an interview schedule that included a consistent set of topics (Blee and Taylor, 2002) – a list of these is given in Appendix 4. The use of the topic guide was, however, limited to its minimum so as to allow a conversation-like interview and to enable participants to raise issues that were important to them. Such an approach allowed for new ideas to emerge which I had not considered in advance. One difficulty consisted, however, in keeping the interviewees focused on the type of information I was seeking. I also took the liberty to digress from the interview guide whenever necessary. I made sure to probe respondents in particular when they were making assumptions or hinting at issues that I wanted to (re)examine (Hannabuss, 1996). Questions such as 'What happened then?' or 'How did you deal with the situation?' were therefore common during interviews. I however kept in mind the questions that were still to be asked and made sure to come back to them.

All interviews ended with a list of demographic questions. A table indexing all the anonymised interviewees was constituted on the basis of these socio-demographic responses (this table can be found in Appendix 3).

The interviews lasted between forty-five minutes and three hours, depending on actors' timetables, their readiness to speak and their experience as an activist. Another factor impacting on the duration of the interviews was the setting of the interview. It appears from my interviews that those taking place at participants' homes lasted much longer than those taking place in other places. All interviewees however remained conscious of being engaged in an interview, rather than in a casual conversation. Expressions such as 'it doesn't make sense, does it?' or 'sorry I'm being boring' were indeed pronounced by quite a few interviewees. In three cases, participants were joined towards the end of the interview by other people – in one case by the husband, in another by colleagues and in the last one by a fellow activist, which I could not prevent. Though it changed the nature of the interview, it did also enrich the discussion.

In two particular instances, I resorted to group interviews – one with five young people (16 to 19 years old) and another with two young people (both 17 years old). In both cases they had expressed the wish not to 'be alone'. I wanted to respect their will and felt that it could potentially lead to a greater emulation (Lewis, 1992). It was indeed very efficient, most of all because the young people knew each other and had positive intents towards each other. The discussion was very natural and went on for quite a long time.

Interviews were recorded with a very small PC dictation machine. The presence of the recording machine did not seem to matter for most of the

respondents. Some interviewees however did not wish to have personal issues or the report of legally reprehensible activities recorded, so three interviews were only partially recorded. I was also taking notes in order to record important themes and reflexions made by interviewees to prompt other questions.

All interviewees were very cooperative and loosened up despite initial anxiety about the microphone and the interview for some of the interviewees. For many respondents, our encounter was not just an interview, but proved to be a very valuable opportunity for introspection and adjustment with regard to their involvement. I received numerous oral and electronic messages thanking me for the interviews, which had apparently helped respondents to think about their involvement, motivations and evolution. For some, the interview provided the opportunity to speak about issues they did not normally get the opportunity to discuss.

Transcription, analysis and interpretation of data

Transcription of recorded interviews has become a common practice in most qualitative research (Hannabuss, 1996; MacLean et al., 2004; Seale and Silverman, 1997; Wellard and McKenna, 2001). There has however been little discussion on the techniques of transcription and the issues arising from transcribing speech into text, even though the quality of transcription considerably impacts on the analysis. As argued by MacLean et al. (2004: 113), 'transcribed text can never totally capture the complexity of the interaction nor be completely error free'. However, following basic theoretical,

methodological and ethical principles considerably helped in the process of transcribing.

In order to ensure accuracy of transcription, I designed in advance a notation system, which I adhered to during the transcription of recorded interviews. In line with Sandelowski's (1994) argumentation, I considered that the informational content of the data had priority. I therefore concentrated on accurately transcribing the actual content delivered by respondents, rather than using the techniques of conversation analysis advocated by Seale and Silverman to 'improve the accuracy with which the data is recorded' (Seale and Silverman, 1997: 379). Six interviews took place in places with extraneous background noise, which resulted in a longer duration of transcription due to numerous listening of the recording. For the purpose of data transcription, I resorted to a special transcription pedal (WavPedal), which considerably diminished transcription time. Transcription is a very demanding and time consuming process. However, this considerably enhances the capacity to analyze.

The qualitative data derived from my sixty-five transcribed interviews constituted a considerably large corpus of unstructured material, which needed to be organised to give interesting results. A well thought-out strategy of qualitative data analysis was therefore required to manage the organising, coding, synthesising and interpretation of data. My approach to data analysis was mainly inductive – as is often the case in qualitative research – in the sense that I approached the analysis of data with few pre-determined themes. Using an inductive approach, I was able to let theory emerge out of the data (Bryman, 2004; Glaser and Strauss, 1999; Hannabuss, 1996).

However, my analysis was also informed by concepts and theories developed in the social movement and social problems literature, as introduced in Chapter 2.

As advised in the literature, data analysis and interpretation were conducted in parallel to data collection (Glaser and Strauss, 1999). Though no substantial analysis was carried out during fieldwork in France, the notes taken before and after interviews helped me refine my research interests and incited me to explore additional topics. For instance, after the first few interviews, once I had developed a sense of important directions and emerging themes, I was able to tighten the topics of interest and limit the number of questions asked to subsequent respondents (Blee and Taylor, 2002; Bryman, 2004; Sandelowski, 2000).

The process of coding is key in the classification and organisation of qualitative data analysis. The themes identified and how they are coded depend on the researcher's interpretation of interview transcripts, as well as on the objectives of the study. Once codes were created, they were then applied to remaining data. More abstract issues apparent in interviews, such as underlying themes, ideas and core meanings, were similarly classified during the process of coding (Lofland and Lofland, 1995). A qualitative analysis software package, NVivo, was used to assist in analysing interview data. This software allows for text to be coded according to the process defined above. It offers the opportunity to index, retrieve and group the coded segments using different search commands. This saved considerable time as compared to manual data classification.

3.3 Ethical issues and reflexivity

This PhD research has been designed and conducted in accordance with the ESRC Research Ethics Framework from its inception through to completion of the research results, and has been reviewed and monitored by Warwick University's Research Ethics Committee. Qualitative researchers have to be particularly sensitive to ethical considerations since the data collected involve the sharing of lived experiences. They have specific responsibilities and obligations to ensure informed consent, exert reflexivity and to proceed using rigorous and authentic interpretation and description of lived experiences.

All participants were recruited in person and were invited to take part voluntarily in the research. I was entirely honest about who I was, the purpose, methods, intended use and dissemination of the information gathered and outcomes of the research. I made sure to be clear about what participation in the research entailed for the respondents and its potential implications. All participants were provided with a clear summarised personal code of ethics and an information sheet supplying them with all these details. It was only then that they were asked to give their informed consent.

Confidentiality of information supplied by participants and respect of respondents' anonymity were a central concern in my research. I made sure that nothing said could be traced back to the participants in order to prevent any harmful repercussions. Despite many interviewees' willingness to be named, I decided to anonymise all participants so that none can be identified.

Such care is necessary as researchers are not always in a position to control the use of research results in the public domain. It is therefore of the utmost importance to ensure that the potential risk to individual participants remains minimal (Düvell et al., 2008).

Positionality of researcher

The idea that a researcher cannot be value-free has now been accepted by most researchers. The researcher's values and bias play a role at each stage of the research process, such as in the choice of a research topic, the formulation of research questions and the conclusions of the study (Bryman, 2004). The researcher's worldviews necessarily impact on the conduct of research. However, as argued by Bryman (2004: 22), 'it is important to make sure that there is no untrammelled incursion of values in the research process and to be self-reflective and so exhibit reflexivity about the part played by such factors'.

In addition, my own involvement as an activist advocating for human rights in general and of migrants in particular has impacted upon the research process. All social research involves what Thorne (1979: 73) describes as a 'problematic balance, a dialectic between being an insider, a participant in the world one studies, and an outsider, observing and reporting on that world'. As a researcher, I had to define the exact nature of my positioning vis-à-vis participants through reflexivity (Meyrick, 2006), as this balance is absolutely fundamental for collecting rich data in social movement research (Blee and Taylor, 2002). At the beginning of the interviews, I consistently introduced my study as both a rigorous scientific piece on new

types of movements as well as a piece that could be useful to interviewees. In both countries I was assigned an 'outsider status' by some interviewees, which proved useful in the course of the research for it prevented answers such as 'well you know what I mean'. To French participants, I studied in England and was therefore not directly involved as an activist in France⁴⁹. However, telling them about my own background reinsured them that I was not coming to 'judge' them or with negative intent in mind. To English participants, I was French and was therefore considered as an outsider to English politics, even though I had mentioned my activities in support of migrants in England.

At all times, I reflected upon my position within the project as a young white educated woman and how this could impact on my relationship with the participants, the research orientation and findings. During the group interview with five young people in France, I was surprised by the deference participants showed towards me because of my status as an 'educated' person, in particular as a 'researcher'. This was made clear to me for they consistently resorted to the 'vous' form (polite form of you), while we had been using the 'tu' form (you singular) with most of the other adult respondents. This shows the impact that being 'educated' can have on the relationship between interviewer and respondents. However, they simultaneously emphasized the fact that it was 'easier' for them to confide to a young person like me than to some other adults.

⁴⁹ At the time, I was, however, involved in supporting undocumented families and single adults in Paris. However, I deliberately decided to interview activists I was not working with.

The politics of research

Another acute ethical consideration arises from the degree of politicisation of the studied topic and the sensitive issues it raises (Düvell et al., 2008, 2010). Asylum and migration are highly sensitive issues in Europe and asylum-seekers, immigrants and their advocates can face considerable hostility or pressure (Düvell et al., 2010). Moreover, this project implies researching actors' political behaviour which can sometimes involve illegal action, and therefore raises further ethical issues. It is my personal responsibility as a researcher to use the information gathered sensibly and to safeguard the dignity, rights, well-being and safety of research participants and the children, young people and families they advocate for (Finch, 1984). Another issue of concern consists of the use of the research results in the public domain, which, given the sensitivity of my research topic may be damaging to the cause defended by research participants.

My responsibility is also engaged to the extent that research participants do expect something 'in return' and some of them accepted to be interviewed because of what they could gain from it in the long term. As such, there existed an implicit 'research bargain' (Bryman, 2004). Even though this 'obligation' towards them was not formalised, numerous respondents emphasised that my research was highly relevant to them and that they expected my results to be made available. This was my intent, but I also warned them that my thesis would be scientific and non-partisan. I am now considering the possibility of compiling interviews under a different format for their own use.

Conclusions

This chapter has described and justified the choice of design and methodology for this study, informed by the theoretical framework in which I have set the analysis. The particular interest in the conditions of emergence of social mobilisations in support of 'non-status' children, and the absence of previous studies on the issue, required a preliminary quantitative approach to map the field of contention in each country. This was provided by the political claims-making analysis. This phase had a 'development' function and contributed to informing the qualitative method which involved in-depth interviews with actors involved in campaigning in support of 'non-status' children. The chapter described the sampling method of both 'key' informants and main informants. I then considered the process of analysis of the data based on grounded theory. Finally, ethical issues were discussed in light of my own background and positionality with the research project and with regard to the particular sensitivity attached to issues of irregular migration and asylum.

The following five chapters will present the findings from the data collected and analysed for this study. The next chapter deals with the political claims-making analysis. This helped me identify some important differences between France and England, which are further discussed in the remaining chapters.

Chapter Four: Mapping the field of contention

The following chapter aims to investigate the specific field of contention related to ‘non-status’ children in France and England⁵⁰. To that end, I use a political claims-making analysis, as described in Chapter 3. I retrieved articles through a keywords search (See Appendix 2), selected a relevant subset of these and coded each of the instances of claims-making I identified, following the methodology devised by Koopmans and Statham (1999, 2000a). I thus coded both protest actions and discursive claims, looking into who made the claims, where, when, about what, etc. I was thus able to produce a new dataset on political claims-making on ‘non-status’ children in France and England from 2000 to 2007.⁵¹ Overall, I coded 663 claims made by collective actors in France and 609 in England for the period between 2000 and 2007. This enabled me to map the field of contention relating to ‘non-status’ children in France and England. In particular, I identified the actors who made claims on the issue, and was able to analyse the main forms of collective action and targets of mobilisation. Furthermore, I was able to study the ways in which issues were presented in the public space. The qualitative analysis of claims shed light on the main frames of

⁵⁰ Parts of this chapter have been published as a chapter in a book edited by Didier Chabanet and Frédéric Royall on protest of marginalised people in Europe entitled: *Mobilising against Marginalisation in Europe* (Giner, 2010).

⁵¹ Instances of claims-making relating to ‘non-status’ foreign minors are varied. They exclude, however, any political claim relating to young migrants of the second and third generations, the young of the suburbs in France or inner-city youth in Britain, unless a direct parallel or link is drawn between these groups and our group of interest. Similarly, protest actions undertaken by *sans-papiers* actors that do not refer to, or take place in the absence of, children or young people have not been coded. The aim was to consider the issue field of ‘non-status’ foreign minors (and their families) in its individuality.

argumentation developed by leading organisations, as well as the audience they targeted and the solutions they proposed.

I present the results of the data analysis on political claims-making in France and England in the period 2000–07, in which I have systematically considered the impact of the child dimension on the type of actors involved and the framing of their claims. The first section addresses the level of activism on behalf of ‘non-status’ migrant children and families in France and England and the action repertoires that claims-makers use. The second section then considers the content and language of claims used by campaigners in both countries.

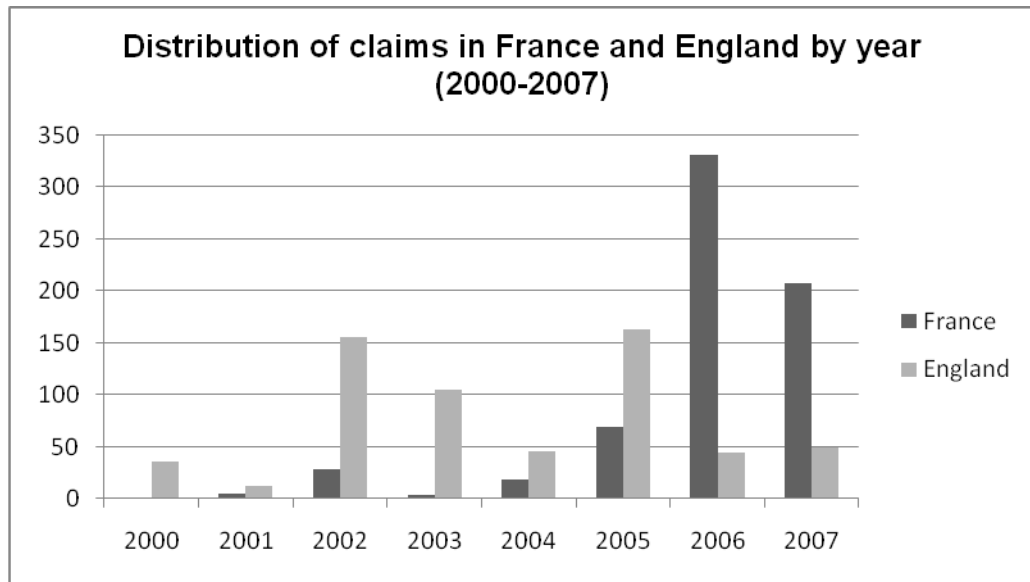
4.1 Political issue-fields in France and England

It is important to know the overall political context in which claims-makers are situated in France and England, and how it has evolved. This implies considering when and where claims were being made, and who the main claims-makers were.

Localisation of Claims in Time and Space

I will first consider the timing (Figure 4.1) and the intensity of claims (Figure 4.2) relating to foreign minors in France and England. Over the eight years of analysis, the difference between both countries is striking.

Figure 4.1: Distribution of claims in France and England by year



As far as timing is concerned, claims-making activities against the removal of foreign minors in England were rather regular and started before the beginning of the 2000s⁵². An increase in claims making activities can, however, be noticed in 2002 and 2005. In the year 2002 debates revolved around the set up of accommodation centres and in particular around the Government's plan to school asylum-seeking children away from mainstream establishments. Debates in 2005 revolved around Section 9, the highly controversial clause of the 2004 Nationality and Immigration Act aimed to incentivise the voluntary removal of failed asylum-seeking families. In France, by contrast, claims relating to the situation of 'non-status' children and their families suddenly appeared in the later part of 2004. Numbers grew rapidly until 2006 only then to decrease in 2007. This stark increase contrasts sharply with the relative regularity and constancy of claims-making activities

⁵² My analysis in this chapter deals with the period 2000–07. When extending the search to earlier decades, some grassroots mobilisation campaigns in support of migrant families were identified in Britain. This confirmed findings from previous research (Bhattacharyya and Gabriel, 2002).

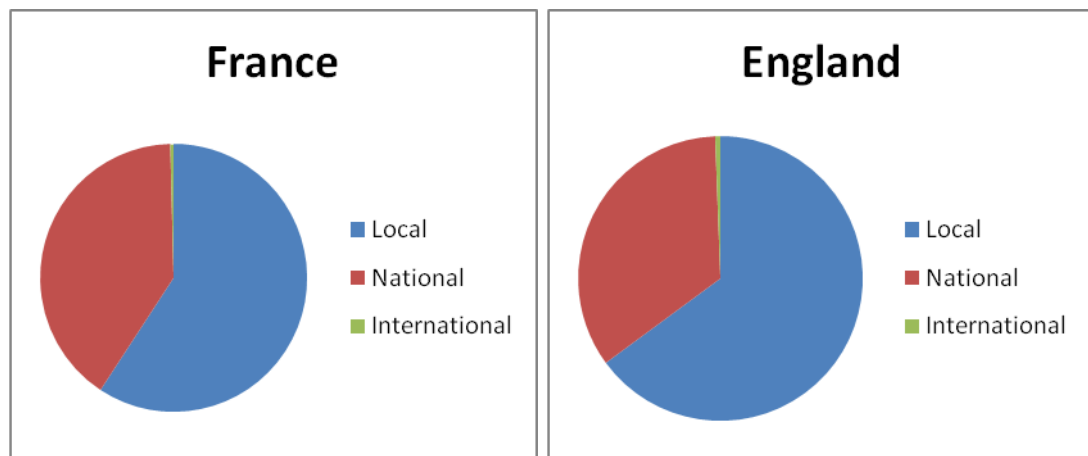
in England between 2000 and 2007. This increase coincided with Nicolas Sarkozy's return as Interior Minister in May 2005 and whose hard line on irregular and family migration may have triggered mobilisations. Also, this two-year period coincided with the campaign for the 2007 French presidential election. In Chapter 2, I described how a circular was passed on 31st October 2005 prohibiting the removal of schooled children and their families until the end of the school year. As Figure 4.1 shows, this 2005 circular by no means resulted in a decrease in mobilisation. On the contrary, the results indicate that it actually represented a window of opportunity for campaigners to build momentum, as exemplified by the following quotes: *The 30th of June is an important deadline. There is now a very strong solidarity in secondary schools, supported by the municipality*⁵³. *What will happen when Prefectures are no longer restrained [by Sarkozy's circular]? [I fear] a slaughter just after the end of the school year, from July 1st*⁵⁴. French claims-makers used this deadline as a battle cry to recruit new actors, structure the movement and mobilise a consensus, which ultimately led to the enactment of a second circular in June 2006.

A second point of interest relates to the main loci of claims-making activities in France and England, as shown by Figure 4.2.

Figure 4.2: Localisation of claims in France and England

⁵³ Michel Charzat, *Le Monde*, 29 June 2006

⁵⁴ Richard Moyon, *Le Monde*, 1st February 2006.



In both countries, local claims-making activities undertaken by supporters outweighed nationally anchored instances of claims-making: 59.2 percent in France and 64.9 percent in England. These results confirm the critical role of grassroots settings in facilitating and structuring collective action, as acknowledged in the literature (McAdam, 1988). These findings are especially striking since the national press generally pays greater attention to national events than to locally anchored mobilisations (Koopmans and Rucht, 2002). Another issue of recent scholarly interest relates to the potential Europeanization trends of social movements (Gray and Statham, 2005). In light of my findings, it can be argued that neither the French nor the English mobilisations show trends of Europeanization: the political contention around the situation of 'non-status' children remains a national issue. The lack of Europeanization of this issue might be explained by the highly national frame of reference in which child and education policies evolve.

Involvement and Stance of Claims-Makers

In order to identify the influence of the ‘child focus’ on the participation and stance of actors, I now analyse the actors involved in making claims. In this subsection, the findings on actors’ involvement and positioning are compared to previous research on pro-migrant mobilisations and child-centred campaigns. In particular, Statham’s (2001) study on pro-migrant claims-makers in Britain is used as a reference against which to assess the specificities resulting from the child focus. Table 4.1 represents the distribution of claims-making activities in both France and England.

Table 4.1: Claims-making by actors in France and England

	France	England
	Actors (%)	Actors (%)
Ministry of the Interior/Home Office	10.6	19.0
Central Government (besides Ministry of the Interior)	1.7	2.1
Legislative	7.7	7.8
State educational institutions	4.4	5.6
Police and Immigration Officers	4.5	4.0
Prefectures (French state executive agencies)	6.5	N/A
Local Government	3.6	2.6
Judiciary	2.3	3.8
Other state institutions	2.9	2.5
<u>Total institutional</u>	44.0	47.4
‘Non-status’ migrants	12.8	13.0
Individuals and communities	11.5	14.5
Pro-migrant children’s organisations	14.5	0.7
Pro-migrant organisations	4.5	7.4
Lawyers	0.9	5.3
Trade Unions	3.5	1.8
Education and Welfare organisations	2.0	1.8
Solidarity and human-rights organisations	2.4	0.5
Churches	0.6	2.1
Children’s organisations	0	2.6
Other	3.4	2.8
<u>Total civil-society</u>	56.0	52.6

As can be seen, actors involved in claims-making activities over 'non-status' migrant children were highly varied in both France and England. An average score has been issued to each claim, ranging from -1 for an anti-migrant children position to +1 for a positive stance. A first point of interest relates to the participation of civil-society organisations in claims-making activities on behalf of 'non-status' foreign minors. In both countries, more than half of all actors involved belonged to civil society: 52.6 percent in England and 56 percent in France. These findings contrast with Statham's results (2001), according to which immigration controversies in the 1990s in England were dominated by institutional actors (64.6 percent). Statham argues that the limited involvement of civil-society actors within immigration debates was due to the highly limited 'selective incentives' available to them in a context of exclusion of migrants from the British definition of the public good. It can be argued, therefore, that the 'selective incentives' available to civil-society actors involved on behalf of 'non-status' migrant children were greater than those available to general pro-migrant claims-makers.

In both countries, the field of contention was pro-beneficiary overall (0.49 in France and 0.50 in England). Actors in charge of conceiving and implementing immigration policies—the Ministry of the Interior/ Home Office, the police/immigration officers and the prefectures (France) were the only actors that adopted a negative stance towards 'non-status' foreign minors. In England, the Home Office made almost one fifth of all claims (19 percent), and adopted a strong anti-migrant children stance (-0.46). By contrast, the French Ministry of the Interior only made one tenth of all French claims and adopted a more favourable stance than its English counterpart (-0.14). With

the exception of the aforementioned actors, institutional actors were mostly favourable to the cause of foreign minors liable to removal. Thus, the network of pro-migrant children claims-makers was not limited to civil-society actors, but also benefited from state institutional support, such as the legislative branch (0.24 in France and 0.53 in England).

In both countries established pro-migrant and anti-racist organisations represent active claims-makers: 9.1 percent in England and 8.2 percent in France. In England, church and faith-based groups also intervened in debates (2.1 percent) with a valence score of 0.92. By contrast, church and faith-based groups were remarkably absent in France (0.6 percent). This result contrasts with previous studies which emphasised the at times stark involvement of local French priests in favour of the *sans-papiers* (Siméant, 1998). The stress on the secular character of the pro-migrant children movement in France, spearheaded by French state schools and teachers, may have overshadowed the usual involvement of church actors alongside the *sans-papiers*.

Also, in both countries, undocumented migrants represented important claims-makers: in France, they constituted the second highest collective actor making claims (12.8 percent), while in England beneficiaries constituted the third most frequent collective claims-makers (13 percent). Their participation in policy debates indicates that they do represent legitimate actors whose claim can resonate with a broader audience. Undocumented migrants thus seem able to break with their exclusion from the social and political arena.

The number of actors working with children was significantly larger than in the pro-migrant mobilisations analysed by Statham (2001). The participation of schools, teachers and other educational workers as claims-makers is remarkable in both France and England. These state actors account for 5.6 percent of all claims-makers in England and 4.4 percent in France. Other actors and institutions working with children – social services and paediatricians – also intervened in favour of migrant children within policy debates. In both countries, the stance taken by these state actors and institutions towards foreign minors was highly positive (0.97). This involvement results from the opportunity given to children without legal status to have access to the education system as well as to the health services. Schools provide one of few opportunities for young people and their parents to develop bonds with teachers and with other pupils and parents.

Another interesting feature in both countries relates to the large presence of non-affiliated civil-society individuals and communities as claims-makers (14.5 percent for England and 11.5 percent for France), adopting a highly positive stance towards ‘non-status’ foreign minors (0.93 for England and 0.97 for France). These actors did not mention an affiliation to any party or organisation. Instead, they highlighted their close contact with children and families liable to removal in their role as parents, friends or neighbours. This involvement of non-affiliated citizens constitutes a common feature of child-centred campaigns (Walgrave and Verhulst, 2006).

Children, whether ‘non-status’ foreign minors or ‘indigenous’ children, remained little represented in comparison to adult claims-makers: in France, only 3 percent of all claims-makers were under 18 years of age, while in

England the figure was 7.2 percent. Public debates on foreign minors in both France and England were, therefore, very much about children rather than being shaped by children and young people's opinions. Rather than belonging to the children's liberation movement or youth rights movement⁵⁵, mobilisations for foreign minors remain a movement on behalf of children.

With regard to actors' involvement, the main difference between France and England relates to the presence in France of a 'core' umbrella organisation in charge of defending undocumented children: the Réseau Éducation Sans Frontières (RESF – Network Education Without Borders). The claims-making activities of this umbrella organisation accounted for 14.5 percent of all claims in France. This high percentage is especially striking in light of the young age of this organisation—it was set up in 2004 following the multiplication of grassroots movements in different parts of the country. The RESF brings together hundreds of national and local civil-society organisations, groups and trade unions, active both at the macro-level and at the micro-level. My analysis shows that from 2005 RESF emerged as a highly vocal collective actor⁵⁶. No such 'core' organisation appeared among claims-makers in England, even though an umbrella organisation, the Refugee Children's Consortium (RCC), was set up to defend and promote the welfare of asylum-seeking and refugee children in 1998 (Giner, 2006). Its focus on lobbying rather than on campaigning activities has limited its emergence as a vocal campaigner in the press. This stands in contrast with

⁵⁵ The children's liberation movement appeared in the 1970s and was advocating for adolescents' rights to self-determination. For a discussion on the children's liberation movement, see Freeman (1997: 51–52). The youth rights movement in the United States is a youth-led movement that defends the civil and human rights of young people. See <http://www.youthrights.org/>. [last accessed 24th August 2009].

⁵⁶ An RESF representative, interviewed on 8th May 2007, confirmed the RESF's focus on public campaigning as a way to recruit members of the public into collective action.

the RESF, which favours public campaigning. On the other hand, well-established children's organisations in England, such as Save the Children or the Children's Society, have accepted to take on the cause of asylum-seeking children into public debates (2.6 percent; +1). Such involvement on the part of children's organisations shows their willingness to extend their child-focused concerns to the cause of asylum-seeking children.

Overall, in both countries, the contentious field does not resemble a standard state-challenger dichotomy. Numerous state actors actually supported the cause of 'non-status' foreign minors and their families. Together with civil-society actors they were challenging state representatives in charge of conceiving and implementing migration policies. The generally favourable stance adopted by institutional actors can be interpreted as confirming the central place of children within French and English societies. Similarly, the important role played by actors working with children or concerned by the plight of children suggests that they refrain from differentiating between 'host' children and 'non-status' foreign minors.

Action Repertoires, Addressees and Prompts for Mobilisation

After having assessed actors' involvement, it is important to investigate this specific issue-field further by considering in more detail the actions used by campaigners (those with a +1 valence score). I will consider in turn their repertoire of actions, their principal targets and the issues that triggered their claims.

Some authors suggest that the action repertoire at the disposal of campaigners tends to be largely defined by their political legitimacy (Koopmans et al., 2005; McAdam, 1999). In France and England, the types of action resorted to by claims-makers were characterised by the use of conventional action forms, such as statements, press conferences, petitions and letter campaigns and written communications to policy-makers (73.3 percent in France and 82.6 percent in England). While the *sans-papiers* movement in France is known for its spectacular direct action repertoire, such as church occupations and hunger strikes (Mouchard, 2002, 2009), actors making claims on behalf of minors without a legal status refrained from resorting to confrontational actions (6.6 percent in France and 3.4 percent in England). According to Siméant (1993, 1998), low-resourced actors in France opted for less conventional activities when faced with public authorities' intransigence. With regard to migrant children and families, the relatively low percentage of confrontational protests suggests, therefore, that claims-makers were legitimate enough not to have to resort to radical action forms when addressing power holders with their demands.

Indeed, power holders constituted the main target of mobilisation in both countries. Campaigners primarily assigned blame to the executive branch, in particular the Home Office (England) and the Ministry of the Interior (France). In France however, actors also targeted Prefectures, since Prefects ultimately have the discretionary power to deliver authorisations to remain to migrants living irregularly (Spire, 2008). Campaigners in France were thus able to target the local branch of the executive and have a local conduit to express their grievances and to exert pressure. English campaigners, however, could not rely on similar local institutions to assert their claims. The Home Office in England remains both the ultimate adversary and the target of mobilisation. This reinforces the image of the Home Office as a particularly powerful institution, as shown by its overwhelming presence as a claims-maker.

Table 4.2: Main mobilisation triggers in France and England (2000–07)
(in percentages)

Selected mobilisation triggers	France	England
Deportation / expulsion	28.1	45.7
Regularisations	30	-
Detention	1.7	16.0
Arrest	11.1	4.2
Welfare Withdrawal	-	7.4
Family separation	0.4	4.4

The targeting of the executive branch of government is understandable when considering the issues that trigger mobilisations, as listed in Table 4.2. Indeed, the issues pertain systematically to decisions made by the executive. Furthermore, the findings highlight the extent to which mobilisations are situated in specific national policy contexts.

The predominance of claims relating to deportations in both countries (28.1 percent in France and 45.7 percent in England) can be explained by the increased importance accorded by governments to this form of immigration control. In addition, French actors expressed pro-active claims relating to the 'regularisation' of irregular migrant families (30 percent). The stark concentration on regularisation in France can be explained by the context itself, since it coincides with the exceptional family regularisation scheme in summer 2006. The issue of detention was considerably more prominent in England than in France (16 percent as compared to 1.7 percent in France). This can be explained by the indefinite duration of detention for all asylum seekers in England, including families, compared to the 32-day limit in France. Mobilisations around detention in France tended, therefore, to be closely linked to preventing deportations, while in England campaigns sometimes related solely to the detention of children and families. Similarly, the issue of welfare withdrawal and family separation (11.8 percent) was very specific to England and pertained specifically to the government's attempt to withdraw social benefits for asylum-seeking families at the end of the process: Section 9 of the 2004 Asylum and Immigration (Treatment of Claimants, etc.) Act. Overall, reactions in England tended to be triggered by

governments' actions against specific families' removal, detention or legislative decisions relating to welfare withdrawal, accommodation centres, etc. By contrast, French actors tended to be more pro-active, making claims for family regularisations in the absence of immediate deportation threats, alongside reactions to government policies and practices.

4.2 Qualitative analysis of claims

The following section is based on the semantic content analysis of all discursive claims (statements, interviews, letters) made by actors in France and England. As argued by Koopmans and Statham (1999), verbal statements contain greater discursive information than most other forms of claims-making. Actors, in particular social movement entrepreneurs, strategically resort to claims which they think will resonate in the public domain, appeal to potential supporters and ultimately be successful in mobilising consensus. The following analysis enables us to understand how the issue of 'non-status' foreign minors and families has been discussed in policy debates and political discourses in France and England.

The results in Table 4.3 on the objects of mobilisation show two crucial differences between social mobilisations in France and in England. Firstly, English campaigners were above all concerned with the situation of children and families liable to removal (42.6 percent of the claims concern children, 46.7 percent families) while French actors extended the scope of their claims to individual young adults and sans-papiers (43.3 percent of the claims

concern single adults only). Secondly, English claims-makers concentrated mostly on particular cases (63.4 percent), that is, the child at school threatened with deportation. French actors, by contrast, did not limit themselves to defending particular cases (46.1 percent). Instead, a majority of them defended a more global cause (53.9 percent). French actors tended to present particular cases as instances of a more general situation of injustice affecting the sans-papiers. These two differences between England and France—child-centred versus extension to the entire group of asylum seekers/sans-papiers and particular cases versus a general approach—transpire throughout the analysis.

Table 4.3: Object of the claims in France and England by degree of specificity and group (2000–07) (in percentages)

	France	England
General beneficiaries	19.1	5.6
General child beneficiaries	10.5	22.5
General family beneficiaries	22.1	7.8
General young adult beneficiaries	2.1	0.8
<u>Sub-total</u>	53.8	36.7
Particular adult beneficiaries	6.2	3.8
Particular child beneficiaries	4.7	19.9
Particular family beneficiaries	19.4	38.9
Particular young adult beneficiaries	15.9	0.7
<u>Sub-total</u>	46.2	63.3

Table 4.4: Object of the claims in France and England by group (2000–07) (in percentages)

	France	England
Child-centred claims	15.2	42.4
Family-centred claims	41.5	46.7
Claims centred on young adults	18	1.5
Adult-centred claims	25.3	9.4

Child-Centred Claims-Making Activities

Scholars have shown that claims-makers mobilising on behalf of children generally bring forward child-centred arguments to legitimise their involvement and mobilise a consensus (Best, 1990). This is also the case with regard to pro-migrant children mobilisations. As shown by Table 4.4 above, in England, more than 42.4 percent of all claims were child-centred. However, this is the case for only 15.2 percent of the claims in France.

In both countries, the child-centred character of claims appealed to society's core values on the place of children within society - that is, the importance of protecting childhood and the family as an institution. Actors also focused on rights to which they consider all children should be entitled, such as the right to education, to family life or the right to be safe: *'I don't know whether there should be an amnesty, but to deprive a child of his father is not acceptable'*⁵⁷. English claims-makers referred considerably more often to the high sentimental 'value' of children than their French counterparts. The

⁵⁷ Houria Namir quoted in Le Monde, 16th June 2007.

notion that children are precious and in need of protection from a harmful adult world, basic to contemporary understandings of childhood, constituted a recurrent argument among English claims-makers:

*I have two young sons and they are at the centre of my universe. I would do anything to keep them safe. Everyone has a right to feel safe and I don't care about passports or borders. We are talking here about three children whom we love.*⁵⁸

Victimisation of Blameless Children

In both France and England, one main criticism of the state related to the specific and deliberate victimisation of children and families in the process of immigration enforcement. Beyond criticisms of government's shortcomings in protecting children (Jennings, 1999; Walgrave and Verhulst, 2006), campaigners expressed outrage over the state's responsibility in designing policies which deliberately increased children's suffering: '*Many celebrities have signed a petition where they express the nausea they feel towards situations where children are the first victims of a policy that has gone mad*'⁵⁹. Immigration officers and members of the police were presented as embodying and perpetrating state violence against innocent and blameless children and families. In particular, claims-makers amplified the universal condemnation of violence against children to emphasise the illegitimacy of such exactions in so-called liberal-democratic states. Furthermore, actors referred to the large imbalance between the means used by state actors and

⁵⁸ Damaris Revell quoted in The Guardian, 21th November 2000.

⁵⁹ Ligue des Droits de l'Homme, extract of a petition, in Le Monde, 6th July 2006.

the actual threat represented by 'beneficiaries'. The absence of violence targeted at the state actually benefited campaigners' claims that governments were using means that were not only illegitimate, but also disproportionate. Advocates in both countries emphasised the risks facing children liable to removal. They highlighted the large and long-term impacts of migration policies and practices on children's well-being, in particular on their mental and physical health, as well as on their education level.

Emphasising the child-victim image presents rhetorical advantages to claims-makers confronted with an adverse migration context. This is particularly the case in England, where anti-asylum-seeker prejudices are deeply ingrained within society (Statham, 2001). Tapping into core values of children's innocence and passivity, campaigners are able to side-step the common representation of asylum-seekers as 'dangerous agents'. The reference to children provides the opportunity for campaigners to short-circuit 'arguments that offset or justify the unfairness' (Gamson, 1992: 37) of 'non-status' migrants' treatment. Actors are able to counter that children cannot be held responsible for the situation they are in and are, therefore, deserving of protection. Though there is an obvious strategy behind such argumentation, it seems that asylum seekers' stigmatisation within English society is so deeply engrained that some English advocates themselves differentiated between the innocence of children and the actual culpability of their parents. By contrast, numerous statements in France made the link between the victimisation of children and that of other groups of undocumented migrants: *'The Interior Minister, prevented from chasing children as had been promised*

*for the summer, tries to make up for it by multiplying removals of single adults, including schooled young adults*⁶⁰.

In England, the child-focus is also evident in the numerous references to the national child policy framework. English campaigners attempted to legitimate their demands by amplifying their references to the existing child legislation. English actors put government practices such as detention, welfare withdrawal and deportation in direct opposition to the Government's obligations towards children. In particular, they reminded the Government of its international and national obligations to children's rights and child welfare. The numerous references to the CRC indicate that it has offered English claims-makers discursive opportunities. In particular, the best interests of the child—as enshrined in Article 3 of the CRC—appeared as a primary consideration for English supporters opposing the Government's measures⁶¹.

*Until the government puts the best interests of children before political expediency, and moves to stem the misperception that the UK is awash with absconding families, ministers will be building more and more centres to imprison asylum seekers.*⁶²

English campaigners focused to an even greater extent on the national child legislation, making use of the fact that child welfare is protected in law. The Children Acts (1989 and 2004) and the Every Child Matters Framework were used by campaigners as backgrounds against which to compare government's actions towards asylum-seeking children. *'We are in a cleft stick. ... If we act to do what the immigration authorities want, we would be in*

⁶⁰ RESF quoted in Le Monde, 7th July 2006.

⁶¹ I have shown elsewhere that the government adopts a similar line of argumentation based on the best interests of asylum-seeking children. See Giner (2007).

⁶² Raekha Prasad quoted in The Guardian, 30th July 2002.

*breach of our duty under the Children Act*⁶³. In particular, New Labour's recent policies and discourses on investing in children were used by campaigners as 'a channel for asserting [their] claims in the public sphere' (Koopmans and Statham, 2000c: 160):

*The government has already accepted that, wherever possible, children should be cared for by their parents. ... It seems iniquitous that they have now introduced immigration legislation that militates against this view.*⁶⁴

Schools as Sanctuaries

Scholars have demonstrated the crucial importance of religious sites in providing 'sanctuary' for asylum seekers and undocumented migrants in developed countries, thereby protecting them symbolically and practically from government intervention. Breaking with previous research on 'non-status' migrants, this study shows that church occupations rarely appeared among the activities undertaken by movement actors. However, the discourse analysis indicates that a different institution actually bore the status of 'site of protection' for migrant children: the school. In both countries, activists described the school as one of the sole places of safety and stability available to migrant children in a context of constant threats to their well-being. In claims-makers' argumentation, schools became a *de facto* 'sanctuary' offering protection to children, free from adverse governmental intervention: *'Schools should be places of safety where children are happy to*

⁶³ Chamberlain in The Guardian, 29th August 2005

⁶⁴ Peter Gilroy quoted in The Guardian, 16th November 2005.

*come and learn, not places where they're worried about who's lurking round the corner*⁶⁵. In both countries, schools have long been considered as areas of protection. This explains why advocates expressed moral outrage over the intrusion of police forces and immigration officers within schools for the purpose of arresting migrant children or their parents: *'The Police, when arresting sans-papiers at the school gates, are going a step too far. This can only lead to citizen's indignation'*⁶⁶. Claims-makers were keen to remind politicians that schools are places where children and their parents are supposed to live in peace, and that state authorities needed to ensure this tranquillity: *'The Rectorat (French Local Education Authority) has let go of its responsibility to ensure that parents can access school without being disturbed [by the police]'*⁶⁷. In this sense, these mobilisations can be understood as instinctive 'not-in-my-back-yard' reactions (Futrell, 2003; Trom, 1999) that also express wider feelings of moral outrage. Actors referred to the impact of directly experiencing such disruptions: *'As long as it doesn't affect you directly, you can remain indifferent'*⁶⁸. Furthermore, teachers and social workers referred to their professional duty to justify opposing anyone presenting a threat to a child. Advocates pointed to the discrepancy between their educational and child-protection duties and the actual demands expressed by governments. Through their claims, educational and social workers in France and England were keen to remind the French Ministry of the Interior and the English Home Office that they refused to act as *de facto* immigration officers.

⁶⁵ Headteacher quoted in The Guardian, 30th November 2004.

⁶⁶ William Bourdon quoted in Le Monde, 25th March 2007.

⁶⁷ Michel Sagam quoted by Le Monde, 25th March 2007.

⁶⁸ Karine Bonnet quoted by Le Monde, 30th March 2007.

*As schools we are supposed to (provide) integrated health, welfare and education, then we are told to stop caring about an individual pupil in a split second because it becomes politically correct to do so.*⁶⁹

The notion of schools as sanctuaries is highly resonant in both countries. However, in England, this notion applied to schools as local physical sites: *'The school is a ready-made community that can respond quickly in these situations'*⁷⁰; In France, the notion was extended to schools as French Republican institutions: *'The Minister, candidate of the UMP [Union pour un Mouvement Populaire], is attacking one of the last safe havens for Republican values—the school—by bringing the last stone of his action within this government'*⁷¹. The concept of 'école sanctuaire' (schools as sanctuaries) is highly resonant in France and has been articulated by numerous politicians. In 2002, reviving the notion of school as sanctuaries the Ministry of National Education introduced protective measures to make sure that 'the troubles of society do not penetrate schools'⁷². The Government was aiming in particular to halt the multiplication of acts of violence within and around schools. The analysis indicates a similar use of this notion by French pro-migrant children advocates, with a focus, however, on state violence. Their criticism revolved around the intrusion and perpetration of acts of violence in schools or in their close environment by state actors supposedly in charge of maintaining order. Beyond arguments around local threats, campaigners referred, therefore, to the more general

⁶⁹ Derek Trimmer quoted by The Guardian, 24th January 2005.

⁷⁰ George Fuller quoted by The Guardian, 21th November 2000.

⁷¹ Dominique Voynet quoted in Le Monde, 25th March 2007.

⁷² Xavier Darcos, cited by Le Monde, 28th November 2002.

need to defend schools as institutions whose role is to give impetus and shape to the Republic. French advocates attempted to frame the movement as one working for the protection of education as a Republican principle. In this sense, it was not dissimilar from the movement against religious symbols in schools which also aims to protect Republican ideals.

Integration

In both countries, campaigners expressed feelings of injustice resulting from the uprooting of well-integrated migrant children and families liable to removal. Once again, the difference between the locally based approach in England and the Republican approach in France appears clearly. Claims relating to the presence of children and families liable to removal in England were less centred on the integration within society than on their integration and their belonging to the local, religious or school community. English actors repeatedly expressed moral outrage over the uprooting of children from a safe and loving environment. Campaigners insisted on the strength and duration of the settlement within the community to describe the injustice of children's treatment: *'I was horrified that this child who had been in our school for so long was so upset and so unsure of what was going to happen to him. ... I felt helpless'*⁷³. This line of argument fits with the British government's recent discourses on 'community cohesion' (Worley, 2005).

In France, by contrast, actors often referred to the argument that children and their families are integrated within French society as a whole.

⁷³ Hazel Heron quoted in The Guardian, 21st November 2000.

Actors argued repeatedly that migrant children and families embody the success of the Republican integration model based on attending French schools, acquiring the French language and respecting French laws and principles. In a context of stark questioning of the actual success of the 'intégration à la française' (the French model of Republican integration), actors highlighted its concrete achievements. Thereby, they starkly criticised the state for deliberately preventing families willing to integrate within French society from fulfilling their potential: *'[I] have accepted to help families who are already integrated and only ask to blend into the population'*⁷⁴.

In both France and England, the fact that children were completely alien to their parents' country of origin was considered as wholly unacceptable: *'How can a child be taken away from the country where he grew up, from his school, from his friends, to be sent back to a country that he does not even know?'*⁷⁵ In both France and England, campaigners stressed the process of acculturation that had taken place for migrant children liable to removal. Actors' discourses tended to blur ethnic and religious differences. Claims-makers barely referred to concepts of multiculturalism or race relations in their statements. While this fits within the French hegemonic discourse on integration, it breaks with discourses on cultural diversity in England. As mentioned above, English actors embraced the 'community cohesion' discourse promoted by the New Labour Government. Finally, in both countries, actors largely argued within the boundaries legitimised by the state with regard to migration and integration. Most claims articulated by actors in

⁷⁴ Jocelyne quoted in Le Monde, 11th August 2006

⁷⁵ Claire Abdallah quoted in Le Monde, 16th May 2006.

France and England fitted current state discourses on selective migration policies and the need for migrants to adapt to the host society. Educational success and achievements of children were presented as a further ground for fighting against children's deportation.

[Nicolas Sarkozy's] action has resulted in some migrant families becoming clandestine, when they have nothing to do with problems of insecurity or violence for most of them, and who simply ask to be able to live quietly on our territory.⁷⁶

Local Community (England) Versus Common Humanity (France)

One key difference between both countries relates to the higher principles referred to by campaigners. In England, as mentioned above, the community feeling was crucial in advocates' argumentation. In addition to the sense of outrage born out of daily disruptions, actors referred to the stark emotional component of their mobilisations. Such reactions are best characterised by Jasper's (1997, 1998) concept of 'moral shocks'. English actors generally highlighted the extraordinary sense of loss occurring within the community as a result of the deportation (or detention) of children. English actors particularly emphasised the distress experienced by 'indigenous' children and the community as a whole: *'This is not just good news for Lorin but for the rest of the pupils too. If she had been plucked away from her friends the effect on them doesn't bear thinking about'*⁷⁷. Jennings (1999: 1) ascribes the term 'pain and loss experiences' to 'the exposure to events involving bodily

⁷⁶ Julien Dray quoted in Le Monde, 24th August 2006.

⁷⁷ Derek Trimmer quoted in The Guardian, 2nd April 2005.

harm, injury, illness, or death, whether personally and directly experienced or more remotely and vicariously experienced'. While detention and deportation do not directly cause physical pain, they were presented by claims-makers as highly violent experiences similar to death: *'The family has so much to contribute. It would be a blow to the community here to lose them. As for the school, it would be like bereavement to see them go'*⁷⁸. In England, migrant children's status as victims was thereby extended to the entire local community, as expressed by a school teacher: *'If something happens to one person, it happens to the rest of us, too'*⁷⁹. Taken together, these claims suggest the great importance accorded to the local community by English people and were an expression of actors' readiness to mobilise when they felt that the stability of their community was under threat.

In France, by contrast, the notion of local or religious community was superseded by the principle of common humanity and universality. Notwithstanding a child-centred focus, French campaigners involved on behalf of sans-papiers children articulated a more general world-view attached to social justice and human solidarity: *'Everything I have undertaken for this family is not about politics, but simply about human solidarity'*⁸⁰. Actors referred to the primacy of fundamental human rights over positive law: *'People have to respect the law, but not any law. People may have to disobey unjust laws'*⁸¹. French campaigners also resorted to historical comparisons and, in particular, to the French resistance movement organised against the collaborationist Vichy Regime and the Nazi occupation. Actors

⁷⁸ Jon Posnett quoted in The Guardian, 19th April 2004.

⁷⁹ Samantha Chadwick quoted in The Guardian, 21st November 2000.

⁸⁰ Muriel Kheladi quoted in Le Monde, 30th March 2007.

⁸¹ Valérie Tranchand quoted in Le Monde, 18th June 2006.

deliberately used a vocabulary commonly associated with France's collaborationist past to depict government practices: *deportations* (for removals) and *rafle* (for arrests), in reference to the mass arrest of Jews. '*When someone comes to your area to take your neighbour to a place he does not want to go to, history shows that if you do not act, you are an idiot*⁸². By doing so, French actors moved from the particular case to general principles (Boltanski and Thévenot, 1991). Campaigners situated themselves within the French discursive context of the nation, the Republic and the universalism of social rights. Previous research has shown that the defence of the French Republic and of its principles have been consistently referred to as central arguments for opposing governmental reforms or new legislation whether relating to pensions, undocumented migrants, homeless people or the environment (Crettiez and Sommier, 2002; Jefferys, 2003). We can thus argue that French actors campaigning on behalf of sans-papiers' children do not divert from the path shown by other recent solidarity movements.

Conclusions

This chapter has investigated the extent to which the child focus of social mobilisations in support of 'non-status' migrants has an impact on the type of actors involved, their action repertoire and the type of claims formulated. It also examined, through the comparison between France and England, the extent to which these mobilisations were affected by national specificities. In

⁸² Marie Desplechin quoted in Le Monde, 7th July 2006.

both France and England, social mobilisations predominantly took place at the local level, which confirms the importance of grassroots settings in facilitating and structuring collective action. Campaigners relied upon a very broad network of supporters that went far beyond usual migrants' supporters and was not just limited to civil-society organisations. The analysis indicates that the cause of foreign minors succeeded in attracting a wide range of supporters in both France and England, in particular actors interacting with or showing a concern for children. Educational institutions constituted active claims-makers, as well as non-affiliated citizens stressing their proximity to children and families as parents or neighbours. A crucial difference relates, however, to the existence of a 'core' organisation specially in charge of defending the cause of sans-papiers children and young people in France—the RESF. This network grew out of local mobilisations on behalf of specific families and developed into a national movement playing a role in policy debates. There was no such equivalent in England.

In both France and England, decision-makers in charge of migration policies constituted challengers' main adversary. Campaigners opposed the Home Office (England) and the Ministry of the Interior (France) for their policies targeting migrant children without legal status, in particular removals, the absence of amnesty and in England the issue of detention. To confront governments, actors in both countries emphasised the primacy of education and the role of schools as sanctuaries, as well as referring to the importance of migrant families' integration efforts. Despite similarities, the comparison in campaigners' framing attempts reveals striking differences that can be mainly traced back to the policy context in each country. The analysis provides

evidence that campaigners in England were confronted with a more hostile political context than in France, resulting from the Home Office's aggressive line on migration issues. English challengers seemed to concentrate, therefore, considerably more than their French counterparts on the figure of the 'ideal' child and on the state's obligations towards children. They tapped into core values of children's innocence and vulnerability, as well as reminding the government of the national child welfare legislation meant to protect all children on its territory. By contrast, in France, the government's victimisation strategy was not criticised solely for its effect on migrant children, but tended to be presented as humanely not admissible, whether impacting on children, young people or adults. Another key difference relates to the higher principles referred to by campaigners to gain visibility and resonance. In England, actors articulated concerns pertaining to the pain felt by the community over the loss of some of its members. In France, however, the notion of local or religious community was superseded by the principle of common humanity and universal social justice.

The following chapters aim, through in-depth qualitative interviews, to probe these preliminary findings and better understand how supporters were recruited into campaigning (Chapter 5), the main reasons for mobilising and sustaining involvement (Chapter 6 and 7), and their strategic concerns relating to movement practices and claims (Chapter 8). This shall enable us to better understand how claims, as analysed in this chapter, come into being. The next chapter concentrates on how actors identified in this chapter as locally anchored were recruited into campaigning.

Chapter Five: Structure and dynamics of mobilisations: Actors' recruitment pathways

The political claims-making analysis, though giving an indication of collective actors, did not enable me to identify how actors were recruited into campaigning against child deportations in France and England. In the frame of my in-depth interviews, I thus enquired about individual campaigners' pathways into campaigning. This chapter uses the results of these interviews to build up a picture of the types of people involved in the campaigns and their pathways into activism. The first section looks into the micro settings of mobilisation and how participants' were recruited into campaigning. The second section investigates the recruitment and involvement of secondary actors at the local level, in particular the media and policy-makers. Finally, the third section investigates the role of mobilising structures (as discussed in Chapter 2, Section 1) at meso- and macro-level in providing support in setting up local committees. In particular, I consider the Réseau Education Sans Frontières' role as a multi-level mobilising structure in France and the role of the Refugee Children's Consortium as a lobbying organisation in England.

5.1 Micromobilisation contexts and recruitment into local campaigning

In this section, I begin by analysing the role played by schools in France and England. I then investigate participants' different pathways into campaigning, differentiating in particular between 'affective' and 'political' campaigners.

The school as a central micromobilisation context

My data indicates that the majority of grassroots mobilisations in France and England were rooted in schools. Schools thereby acted as 'micromobilisation contexts', as defined by McAdam (1988) to describe the role played by churches in instigating movement activity during the civil rights movement in the United States. Schools acted as micromobilisation contexts for two main reasons: their intrinsic nature as collective settings and their central role locally.

First, the school provided the context in which mobilisation as a collective process could occur: individual schools provided a collective setting in which issues came to be identified, causes diagnosed and solutions proposed. This is exemplified when identifying actors' reasons for involvement (Chapter 6) and strategies (Chapter 8). In particular, the important concentration of actors with shared objectives, teachers, pupils and parents, all working towards improving children and young people's education and welfare, helped in the development of such shared grievances. Furthermore, schools already provided the setting for numerous collective endeavours – school boards, parents' associations, pupils' activity

groups – which could be relied on. Finally, schools benefited from ready-made connections with local media and local decision-makers. My data indicates that these pre-existent school-based organisations and connections to outsiders proved key to mobilising against child deportations.

Second, schools, as key local institutions and focal points for most of the community, constituted the ideal staging ground for mobilisations (McAdam, 1988). Individual schools provided places of assembly, administrative resources, and crucially leaders ready to adopt a role of leadership or facilitator (Crossley, 2002: 93; McAdam, 1999). Within these established collective settings, headteachers often played a pivotal role. All participants concurred to say that mobilisations were most successful when the headteacher was involved in mobilisations or provided some administrative and logistical support (rooms, distribution of leaflets, photocopies, forums to give information). Participants similarly acknowledged the difficulties involved in running a campaign without being backed-up by the headteacher.

In England, in contrast to France, headteachers quasi-systematically featured as central actors. They were more than simple facilitators in the majority of campaigns under consideration⁸³. The headteachers interviewed referred to their role as heads of schools to explain their involvement: *‘That’s part of our role as headteachers. To be honest, I think we are their advocates in some cases’* (Interview 13 England). All headteachers acknowledged, however, that, while involved as school leaders, they were not necessarily

⁸³ One possible explanation for such situation might be that schools in which headteachers are not involved have difficulties mobilising and thus did not come to my attention.

leading the campaign: *'It wasn't just coming from me at all, in a way I was carried along our way by other people in the school'* (Interview 2 England). English headteachers' central role confirms previous studies highlighting the authority role and autonomy of headteachers in English schools at both primary and secondary school levels (Meuret and Duru-Bellat, 2003: 465; Sharpe, 1997: 333). By contrast, the notion of leadership is less central to French headteachers' identity, in particular at primary school level.

My data furthermore indicates that the strength of the pre-existent collective identity as a school community also influenced collective endeavours. Indeed, the stronger the school identity, the more likely it was that the mobilisation campaign involved the school as a whole. Asked how she would explain why the whole school community mobilised so strongly for a child at risk of removal, a teacher explained: *'This is a small school, there are about 150 children, everybody knows everybody else, and it's a school that has a kind of family atmosphere to it'* (Interview 28 England). *A contrario*, in schools with a loose identity, campaigns were more likely to be led by individual actors or smaller groups of people. This confirms Tilly's 'catnet' model (1978), according to which a set of people characterised by a strong collective identity and dense social networks will have a high capacity for action.

Following the emphasis on the role of the school as a micromobilisation context, I now consider in more depth actors' pathways into campaigning in support of a family at the local level. I identify two different paths into activism. I first consider those who mobilised based on their close personal ties to the child or family threatened with deportation, which I describe as

‘affective campaigners’. I then consider those who strongly mobilised in support of a family without relying on pre-existent ties. Actors without direct ties all have previous experience of protest activism. I thus describe them as ‘political campaigners’.

Affective campaigners: actors with personal ties to the child or young person

Studies have highlighted the key role played by pre-existing affective ties and personal connections in drawing individuals into movement (Gould, 1991, 2003: 236; Snow et al., 1980). In particular, scholars have shown the importance of personal connections with individuals already involved in social movements (McAdam and Paulsen, 1993; Snow et al., 1980). For the purpose of my study, however, the crucial connections predicated mobilisation are first and foremost those linking individual campaigners to people at risk of removal. My data points in particular to the key role played by headteachers and teachers, school parents, and the community of school pupils. The more interactions parents, teachers or children had with the child or the family at risk, the more likely they were to mobilise. These campaigners can be best understood as ‘affective campaigners’, since their awareness stems from interactions with children and young people at risk of removal.

Example of an affective campaigner – Interviewee 17 in England

Interviewee 17 is a nurse working in cancer care. She lives in a wealthy area with her husband and four children, two of whom were adopted from two different countries. She got to know X., a boy from a war-torn country, three years before the interview. He was six years old at the time and he and his mother had just fled a war-torn African country to claim asylum in Britain. He soon became friends with her children. As a result, she became very attached to him. In particular, her third child built a very strong bond to X. Throughout the time, she came to know his mother and learn more about her migration status. As a result of her love for X. and her Christian ethos, she decided to get involved in coordinating a campaign in support of X. and his mother as soon as she heard about the risks they ran of being removed to their country of origin, even though she had never been involved in politics or campaigning activities before.

Teachers and headteachers as first ports of call

In both France and England, teachers and headteachers were often unexpectedly approached by parents or young people coming to explain their situation. This sometimes happened during a teacher/parent meeting or a brief discussion with a child in distress. In some instances, teachers were also made aware of a child's situation through creative writing or drawing session in class, which prompted questions on the side of the teacher. The relationship of trust between school staff and families takes its full meaning in such situations. As highlighted in Chapter 2, educational workers are indeed among the sole institutional actors that families and children meet regularly

(as opposed to health or social workers who they meet irregularly) and who do not exert direct administrative control over their stay (as opposed to immigration officers). In addition, in most instances, 'non-status' parents are not allowed to work, and as a result have few opportunities to meet fellow workers. Those working mainly access work through ethnic networks and thus rarely get the opportunity to build strong social bridges, that is, links to the majority group.

Children and/or parents at risk of removal thus tended to approach headteachers and teachers as figures of authority and trust, hoping they would be in a position to help. A deputy headteacher explained how she was regularly approached by parents threatened with deportation: *'they come to you and say, "Is there anything you can do?" And we say, "No, but we'll try." You have to keep telling them that even all these efforts may not help'* (Interview 3 England). One headteacher described the particular feeling of responsibility arising *'when children turn up in your office first thing in the morning and come in tears showing you a letter from the immigration office'* (Interview 6 England).

The great majority of teachers interviewed mentioned having been suddenly approached by a child or parents to help them with their case:

He just came round and was looking for a letter, asking for a letter to the Home Office, because he was hoping that if he takes a bunch of letters from his teachers to the Home Office, they would let him stay. (Interview 15 England)

In many instances, parents or young people had nobody else to turn to than the teacher. They took advantage of specific teacher/parents' events and one-on-one meetings to reveal their situation:

En fait, l'année dernière, à la rentrée, je fais ma petite réunion de parents traditionnelle voilà et puis à la fin de la réunion, je dis que les parents qui veulent me voir pour me demander un rendez-vous ou qui ont des questions qui concernent leur enfant ... peuvent venir me voir à mon bureau. A ce moment là, j'ai un monsieur qui me pose une lettre comme ça sur mon bureau. Je l'ouvre, je la regarde et puis j'ai du mal à comprendre ce que ça signifie véritablement euh. Donc je suis un peu interrogative, je relis et je lis 'La préfecture rejette votre demande etcétera'.⁸⁴ (Interview 32 France)

The close social ties between headteachers/teachers and families thus had a direct impact on their readiness to mobilise.

Involvement of school parents

In the political claims-making analysis presented in Chapter 4, I identified a large group of undefined actors for whom there was no mention of a particular affiliation or profession – 11.5 percent in France and 14.5 percent in England. More in-depth preparatory research and subsequent interviews highlighted the central position occupied by school parents in this group of undefined actors.

⁸⁴ What happened is that last year, during the usual teacher/parents' meetings at the start of the school year, I said at the end that parents who want to see me individually or who have questions regarding their child ... can come and see me at my desk. And there comes a man who puts a letter on my desk. I open it, look at it, I have a hard time understanding what that really means. So I'm kind of clueless, and I read it again, and it says: 'The prefecture rejects your demand, etc'. (Interview 32 France)

Most parents interviewed insisted on the importance of social ties resulting from their child's school attendance to explain their involvement. A mother thus argued that *'if T. hadn't come to our school, we wouldn't have known them. We wouldn't have known his mother'* (Interview 17 England). In particular, friendship ties between their child and the child threatened with deportation were important predictors for their involvement: *'Ben le déclencheur, c'est la copine de ma fille hein. La première fois qu'on a fait quelque chose c'est parce qu'il y avait un enfant en jeu. Les parents, on les connaissait pas à la base'*⁸⁵ (Interview 28 France). Parents mentioned the role played by their own children as recruiting agents. Referring to her daughter, a mother thus explained: *'She made me cry. I was really upset when I heard her. I was really kind of like, it was a panic feeling that "I've just got to do something"'* (Interview 23 England). Teachers and other activists interviewed similarly emphasised the key role played by friendship ties between school children in furthering parental involvement. Based on these friendship ties, children had the power to rally their wider family: *'they would spread out, and they would bring their Grandmas and Granddads and aunties and uncles'* (Interview 22 England).

One factor impacting on parental involvement related to the local setting in which mobilisation took place. Parents were more likely to mobilise in wealthy areas or in places where diversity was seen as an asset. In such settings, campaigners acknowledged their privileged situation with regard to

⁸⁵ So the trigger for our involvement, it's our daughter's friend really. The first time that we did something, it's because there was a child at stake. We didn't know the parents then (Interview 28 France).

mobilising resourceful actors that benefited collective action. Referring to the parents of children attending her school, a teacher argued:

We have top professionals in this school and they are willing and able to become involved. In many, in most schools in M., that just wouldn't be the case. You know, the only professionals that you'd have would be the teachers and we've one skill but we don't have all those skills. (Interview 28 England)

In wealthy schools, mobilisations were largely based on parents with close political connections, a law background or experience of campaigning and advocacy work. By contrast, strong and large-scale parental involvement was rarer in socio-economically deprived areas:

On a essayé d'ouvrir aussi certaines réunions en disant 'voilà venez', mais y a jamais eu beaucoup de monde parce que c'est difficile de mobiliser ici. ... Bon les mamans elles travaillent pas, bon les papas, ils travaillent pas des fois aussi. C'est vraiment des milieux défavorisés donc ils sont là pour signer les pétitions, dire 'on n'est pas d'accord' mais après s'engager plus c'est compliqué.⁸⁶ (Interview 28 France)

As explained by the English teacher mentioned above, in less well-off areas, teachers were often the most resourceful actors. There were, however, exceptions, in particular in areas with a strong collective identity and a history of local mobilisations.

⁸⁶ We tried to open up meetings to get people to come. But few people have come because it's hard to mobilise people here. Mums don't work here, as for the dads, in some cases they don't work either. These are really disadvantaged areas. So they agree to sign petitions and say 'we don't agree with that decision' but it's more complicated to get them involved. (Interview 28 France)

Overall, another consensus emerged in both countries over the fact that it was easier to mobilise school parents around a primary school than a secondary school. At nursery or primary school level, parents were much more likely to get involved as they often brought their children to school and therefore came to interact with both teachers and other parents, as explained by a mother: '*Il se trouve que ce sont des gens que je vois tous les jours*'⁸⁷ (Interview 4 France). At secondary school level, however, any kind of information to parents first filtered through the child/young person. Parents were thus much less likely to be confronted with the actual situation of a child or a family at risk of removal. At the same time, at secondary school level, children and young people were then much more likely to become full actors of mobilisation and to assert their own opinions.

Involvement of school pupils

Only young people aged sixteen or over, nine in total, were interviewed in the frame of my PhD research. This does not mean, however, that only young people over sixteen mobilised on behalf of their friends or fellow pupil. On the contrary, in both France and England, participants recounted the unconditional support shown by pupils notwithstanding their age (see Chapter 8 Section 1 for a wider discussion). This choice to interview young people over sixteen primarily results from the fact that my PhD research project was developed as a research project focusing on adults and authorised as such by the Ethics committee. Thus, only young people over 16 could be formally interviewed alongside adults. However, I also had

⁸⁷ As it happens, it's people that I see every day (Interview 4 France).

informal discussion with six young children involved in campaigning against the removal of a friend, which proved highly informative.

As mentioned in the case of school parents, friendship ties were also key to spurring children and young people into involvement. Overall, pupils' reactions depended on their age and took on different forms. Primary school teachers and parents of young children all highlighted children's unanimous expression of anger, rage and sadness when told about the situation of a fellow pupil. In many cases, in particular in England, young children played an important role in mobilisations. Referring to pupils at school, a mother argued: *'It's them that have driven the campaign. Whatever we ask them, they've got a hundred ideas'* (Interview 17 England). All participants in France and England stressed the key role played by older pupils during campaigns based in secondary schools. They were more used to staging protests or leading activities and as a result were quick to organise into a campaigning group. Having young people involved considerably affected the dynamics of mobilisation. In terms of logistics, for instance, this meant that a large part of the school community, generally counting 100 to 1,000 pupils, added its weight to the campaign through signing a petition, demonstrating or sending letters. Adults viewed young people's wide social networks as a key advantage. In particular, young people's involvement in online social networks enabled them to act very quickly, as a secondary school headteacher noticed: *'Quite simply they were the most effective networking tool we could ever have and obviously through Facebook and Bebo and things like that, they were amazingly effective in putting pressure on politicians'* (Interview 13 England).

Pupils' participation in such campaigns has been the subject of numerous debates in both France and England. Teachers in both countries were accused by decision-makers of taking advantage of their role of authority and manipulating children into getting involved: *'A la préfecture, ils nous ont balancés des trucs pas très sympas en plus sur notre mobilisation en nous disant qu'on instrumentalisait les enfants'*⁸⁸ (Interview 28 France). These accusations were refuted by teachers, parents and young people themselves during interviews. In particular, young people were keen to assert their own political agency and capacity to differentiate between right and wrong:

*Y a des profs qui nous disaient: 'ouais, pourquoi vous faites ça?' Ils sont partis voir notre prof Mme Z. pour lui dire 'Qu'est-ce-que tu fais faire à nos élèves?' alors que c'est nous qui avons pris la décision, c'est pas Mme Z.'*⁸⁹ (Interview 29 France)

Interviewees suggested that it was precisely because of young people's strong power of persuasion that politicians attempted to portray their involvement as indoctrination, in an attempt to discredit them. The role of children and young people as social actors came through very clearly in all campaigns investigated (see Chapter 8 for a discussion of their role as social movement actors).

My data thus indicates that ties linking potential movement participants and those at risk of removal constituted strong predictors of movement

⁸⁸ At the prefecture, they threw some harsh stuff at us about the campaign... telling us that we were manipulating children (Interview 28 France).

⁸⁹ Some teachers were telling us 'why are you doing that?' So they went to talk to our teacher Ms. Z. to tell her 'what are you getting our pupils to do?' whereas we were the ones to decide, not Ms. Z.! (Interview 29 France)

participation. In all these different cases, teachers, school parents and pupils only came to know the situation of the family through the link with children. These relational ties were the main means through which participants learned about the situation of particular families. This is a key issue as school now represents one of the last institutions to which asylum-seekers and irregular migrants are not prevented access. It constitutes one of the only ways for families whose stay is insecure to create and sustain long-term interactions with the majority community.

Teachers, parents and pupils involved as a result of close social ties were in most instances new recruits to activism: *'We were not campaign type people, you know. We hadn't been involved in a campaign before'* (Interview 2 England). These 'affective' campaigners shunned labelling themselves as activists, refusing the ideological dimension associated with activism, as well as being reluctant to identify with 'true' activists (Brown and Pickerill, 2009: 4).

It would be wrong, however, to describe all 'affective campaigners' as new recruits to activism. Some of the actors confronted with a situation – teachers, parents and at times sixth-form pupils (lycéennes) – were themselves long-time activists and used their resources as political activists to campaign on behalf of individual families or young people. At the local level, these long-time activists were keen, however, not to be perceived as being driven by strategy, and stressed the 'genuine' character of their involvement.

Mon engagement pour cette famille-là était comme celui de toutes les autres familles de l'école, enfin je pense que tout le monde

*s'est mobilisé pour cette famille là, sans, sans avoir... Y avait pas d'arrière-pensées à vouloir, comment dire, à vouloir embrigader des gens, à vouloir les impliquer même sur d'autres familles.*⁹⁰

(Interview 9 France)

Political campaigners

In the previous section, I described 'affective' campaigners, that is, those who mobilised as a result of direct interactions with children and families threatened with deportation. However, in both countries, I interviewed committed activists at the local level who had no previous contact to the child or family threatened with deportation. I found that these individuals all had prior experience in protest and/or political activism, or at least had a highly developed political consciousness. For that purpose, I will call these activists 'political campaigners'. The majority had been involved in trade unions or radical party political activism. Others mentioned long-term involvement in human-rights and peace activism, as well as anti-fascism or anti-racism. Only a few had been previously involved in campaigning for or supporting refugees and 'sans papiers'. However all long-term activists mentioned an 'intellectual' interest in the matter:

Bon c'est une question qui m'a toujours intéressée la question des 'sans papiers' mais j'ai jamais milité, je m'étais déjà retrouvée dans des manifs pour les 'sans papiers' mais de loin.

⁹⁰ My involvement in support of that particular family was similar to that of other families at school. I mean, everybody got involved for that particular family, without... without having ulterior motives, such as aiming to recruit people, or get them involved in support of other families. (Interview 10 France)

*Théoriquement je vais dire, intellectuellement ça me parlait.*⁹¹

(Interview 20 France)

Given this intellectual predisposition and their experience of activism, these ‘political campaigners’ had no difficulty crossing the line into activism in support of migrants.

In many instances, ‘political’ campaigners were first approached by a person close to a child or family threatened with deportation who knew about their activism or their potential interest in the issue. At the school level, for instance, teachers not in direct contact with children threatened with removal were told by colleagues about the status of a specific family or young person, precisely because of their reputation as activists:

The teacher probably only approached me because, I’m not even quite sure why, but she thought it would be something I’m interested in. I think just because I was a little bit political and I’d been involved in the union and perhaps I have been on an anti-fascist demonstration at that time. (Interview 19 England)

In such cases, ‘political campaigners’ were contacted precisely because of the resources they possessed as a result of their experience as long-time activists.

In France, another source of recruitment into campaigning against child deportations occurred in the context of trade union activism. Interviewees recollected having been commissioned by their trade union to take part in local RESF meetings, often because they were seen within their trade union

⁹¹ The issue of sans papiers has always interested me, but until then I had never campaigned on this issue. I had gone to some protests, but only from afar. Theoretically I would say, yes, I had an intellectual interest (Interview 20 France).

as interested in social issues: *‘Mon syndicat m’a dit un jour “tiens j’ai une bonne idée pour toi, est-ce que ça t’intéresserait pas d’aller voir pour nous la réunion RESF?” J’ai dit “Ouais c’est vrai, c’est quelque chose qui m’intéresse”*⁹² (Interview 20 France). In other instances participants decided to take part in RESF’s activities in a proactive manner, spurred into action by political circumstances (see Chapter 6) and driven by the will to reinvigorate left-wing activism, outside of unions or party politics. These campaigners approached pre-existing RESF committees or decided to set up new ones without previous ties to a ‘non-status’ family and/or to friends or colleagues campaigning for a child. Interestingly, all these ‘political’ campaigners mentioned a similar fatigue related to their previous involvement in party politics or unionism.

By contrast, none of the English ‘political campaigners’ mobilised in such a proactive manner. This might be due to the fact that no mobilising structure such as RESF existed in England. As a result, ‘political’ campaigners could only get involved when they were made aware of such a situation, that is, when a campaign took place. We will discuss in more depth this key difference between France and England in the next section.

Example of a political campaigner – Interviewee 18 in France

Interviewee 18 is a history and geography teacher in a secondary school in Paris, in his late fifties at the time of interview. During the 1968 student revolution, he decided to join Lutte Ouvrière, a Trotskyist party, which he felt

⁹² My union told me one day ‘we have a good idea for you, would you be interested in going to the RESF meeting on behalf of the union?’ I said ‘yes, it’s true, it’s something I’m interested in’ (Interview 20 France).

represented best his interests and values. He stayed in this party for many years. In 1995 [a year marked by large-scale demonstrations in France], he decided to join the Confédération Nationale du Travail (CNT) because he was disappointed with hierarchical structures and with the way extreme left groups were dealing with politics. He had always been interested in migration issues, and was sensitised to the situation of the 'sans-papiers', but was not actively involved. In 2006, a fellow teacher and unionist active with RESF informed him that a family in his school was threatened with deportation. From that point on, he never ceased to be involved with RESF, first within his school and very rapidly at a meso-level.

Involvement of 'non-status' families and young people in campaigning

While these mobilisations are mainly composed of supporters, it is important to take into account that 'non-status' families and young people are also actors. Indeed, as indicated by the political claims-making analysis, they constituted claims-makers in their own right. In recent years, some activists and scholars alike have affirmed and welcome the transformation of 'non-status' migrants into 'political actors' (Nyers, 2003). In France, in particular during the 1996-1997 movement, the 'sans papiers' strongly insisted on being considered as an autonomous movement, independent from French humanitarian and refugee organisations. The 'sans papiers' thus relied on their own capacity to defend their cause, thereby asserting their own agency as political actors. Given this background, it is therefore important to consider

the role played by undocumented families and young people in the campaigns.

My data shows that in both France and England, families and young people at risk of removal were central actors in the campaigns. Parents and children were systematically consulted on campaigning orientations and activities: *‘Dans le comité c’était “rien, aucune action du comité ne sera entreprise sans l’accord de la famille.” Voilà, c’était vraiment, enfin, pour moi, on fait pas les choses à la place des gens*⁹³ (Interview 25 France). Similarly, those who had been activists in their country of origin, or who had good knowledge of the host country language were able to play an active role through petitioning, speaking at meetings and organising their own defence. However, my data indicates that, while systematically consulted before undertaking any action, most ‘non-status’ parents played a rather ‘passive’ role during campaigning activities. According to campaigners and families alike, such limited involvement as campaigners was due to the numerous barriers faced by ‘non-status’ parents. The first and most common obstacle to active campaigning related to undocumented parents’ limited language skills. Furthermore, in many instances, parents were described as very fragile, battling with depression because of what they had experienced in their own country and their situation in the host country. Fear was another key barrier, resulting both from the situation of illegality in which they lived and the fear of the campaign’s detrimental effect. In particular, families in both France and England often expressed concern over their sudden visibility, keen to

⁹³ In the committee, our motto was ‘no action by the committee will be undertaken without the family’s agreement’. So that was really, I mean, in my opinion, you don’t do things instead of people (Interview 25 France).

preserve anonymity for fear of what could happen if they were returned to their country of origin: *'They appeared on TV twice but after that they didn't want any more publicity because they were frightened of what would happened if they returned'* (Interview 6 England). Some interviewees in France, however, recounted cases of newly regularised parents who campaigned in support of other families at risk of removal.

In a context where parents often took a backseat because of the many obstacles to their active involvement, 'non-status' children came to play a key role in the process of securing their status. In both countries, supporters' accounts portrayed children and young people at risk of removal as highly resilient and willing to get involved. Children as young as six translated for their parents, while older children came to talk at meetings or petitioned on their own: *'Les plus grands médiateurs qu'on ait eus, ce sont les enfants. On a des jeunes, enfin des enfants parce que ce sont des élèves de collège, essentiellement de collège, qui font du travail d'interprétariat'*⁹⁴ (Interview 12 France). In many instances, children adopted the role of spokesperson for the family. Having attended school in the host country, these children and young people possessed the cultural codes enabling them to address bystanders. However not all children and young people showed the desire to get involved, having to deal with mixed feelings of fear, shame and a desire to 'get on with their own life'.

To conclude this section, we can see that the fact that children are involved has a considerable impact on the type of actors involved and the

⁹⁴ The best ombudsmen we have had have been the children. We have young people, or rather children, because they are still under 13, who have been translating for us for instance (Interview 12 France).

way they get involved in campaigning activities. In most instances – besides the case of ‘political campaigners’ – without the presence of children, actors would not have known about the specific situations of families and would not have been confronted with their case. Furthermore, children in families at risk of removal often come to play a key role as intermediate, translators and in many instances as advocates for the family. The following section now investigates local campaigning groups’ relationships to other local actors that were identified as key by participants themselves.

5.2 Linking up to influential local players: the media, politicians, solicitors and church leaders

Equating local campaigners in France and England to the actors mentioned previously would not be fair to the diversity of actors involved locally on behalf of children and young people at risk of removal. Though it is not possible to review all supporters, it is important to mention some key ‘secondary’ actors at the local level: local media, solicitor, politicians and church groups (in England).

Relationships with newspapers and journalists

The media generally play a key role in publicising problematic situations. Hence research participants all emphasised the importance for families and young people threatened with deportation to get media coverage locally and at best nationally. In-depth interviews enabled me to get a clear picture of

campaigners' media work, which constituted in many instances a central part of campaigning activities.

In France, campaigners involved with RESF from the beginning argued that RESF as a whole and local committees benefited from large media attention, often that they had not solicited themselves. According to RESF campaigners, the school year 2005/2006 was the year in which the issue of undocumented families and young people and RESF got most media coverage at national level. This corroborates findings from Chapter 4, which showed a definite peak in news stories on the issue in 2006. At the time, journalists would contact campaigners proactively. At the time of interviews in 2008, campaigners still expressed satisfaction over media coverage. A recurring problem, however, related to journalists' predominant interest in sensational stories and thus made it difficult for campaigners to sustain media interest in the long term.

In England, campaigners stressed the key role played by local media in publicising cases. Overall, English research participants were at first highly sceptical of journalists' ability to cover events without biases. These fears were closely linked to the tabloid culture present in England, as expressed by one of the key informants: *'the impact it has on teachers, it's that it scares them, right into being very wary about what they do on these issues'* (Interview 11 England). However, to many participants' surprise, local media outlets were particularly reactive to their solicitations to cover campaigning activities:

The W. O. was outstanding. The journalist was superb and his knowledge of the ethics of the situation and the developing legal

situation really impressed me. ... One of the best pieces of journalism, of local journalism I have seen for ages. (Interview 13 England)

Thus in both France and England, campaigners acknowledged a certain success in attracting media coverage. My analysis indicates that (a) personal resources and relations, and (b) journalists' own stance on the issue were key to securing media support, alongside campaigners' more strategic work (see Chapter 8).

First, campaigners' personal connections with journalists were most likely to ensure ultimate media coverage: *'We didn't get any negative experience but at the same time we were contacting specific journalists that we knew would [be supportive]. Again that's where L. played a role because she knew who to contact to be listened to'* (Interview 15 England). Schools and teachers relied on their credibility and excellent integration within the local landscape to attract media coverage:

It's quite acceptable from a school point of view to phone up the press and say 'well we're singing a song, we're doing this, please come in'. Because we phone them up anyway, the local press, to come in and film us when we're doing some sort of celebration.

(Interview 28 England)

The same interviewee highlighted the credibility provided by her profession as crucial to accessing the media: *'I just think it carries more weight. My opinion is supported by the fact that I'm a teacher. ... You know because I'm a professional, I can use my role'* (Interview 28 England). Such familiarity with journalists was key to attracting media coverage (Neveu, 2002). If it did

not pre-date campaigns, familiarity grew out of repeated interactions and provided campaigners with a list of journalists to contact in emergency situations.

Second, journalists' own positive stance on the issue was crucial to securing coverage. From interviewees' accounts, some journalists were particularly sympathetic and became important allies in the fight against a family or young person's removal. This confirms previous findings on the potential role of journalists as 'partisan actors' (Patterson and Donsbach, 1996). A participant mentioned the case of a journalist who had taken upon himself to secure housing for an undocumented family:

*Le journaliste met dans son papier: 'si vous avez des moyens de loger ces personnes, téléphonez à ce numéro'. On a eu, je sais pas moi, une bonne quinzaine d'appel de gens qui nous disaient 'alors moi je peux loger.'*⁹⁵ (Interview 19 France)

In England, much more so than in France, participants recounted how local newspapers came to take sides and to openly support a family's campaign: *'They were actually luckily for us very supportive. Unbelievably supportive. I mean they did help the campaign immensely'* (Interview 19 England). Participants portrayed journalists ready to take risks, such as that of losing readers, to report positively on campaigning activities: *'The journalist made a conscious decision to write in support of S's family, rather than detract from it. And probably he could have lent the other way, but he didn't'* (Interview 16

⁹⁵ The journalist puts in his article 'if you have some ways to host these people, call the following number'. So we got, I don't know, a good 15 phone calls from people saying 'I can host that family' (Interview 19 France).

England). Hence campaigners' personal resources and journalists' personal stance played a key role in ensuring media coverage.

Role of local politicians in campaigning activities

The expectations toward and role played by local politicians were different in France and England. I first consider the situation in England, followed by the French campaigners' relationship to local politicians.

In England, the Member of Parliament (MP) constituted a key intermediary and seemed to be highly influential in raising awareness around specific cases. This confirms the central role of constituency representation played by MPs in the British system of parliamentary government (Gay, 2005: 58). In particular, MPs' role in immigration matters, through a hotline specially set up, has been documented by different scholars (Gay, 2005). In most cases, the MP was one of the first people contacted. A school chaplain explained how, following the arrest and detention of a family, they contacted the MP straight away: *'Someone said "we need to ring the MP" and obviously he was in London. So somebody said "this is the number for the House of Parliament" and everybody got the phone out and started ringing this number'* (Interview 22 England). In England, the understanding that MPs are supposed to seek redress on behalf of individual constituents constituted a direct cause of outrage among campaigners who were confronted with an MP reluctant to support a campaign. MPs who were reluctant opposed it based on national concerns, in particular the negative image associated with asylum-seekers: *'The MP was kind of generally a little bit evasive. He is from*

the Labour party. He would say things like “if I support this family, I would have to support all asylum-seekers” (Interview 19 England). Labour MPs, in particular, were more likely to be cautious about rebelling against the party line defended by their Government, which one campaigner came to interpret the following way: *‘The [Labour] MP didn’t want his name mentioned and it was for obvious reasons, because the New Labour government were listening to the complaints of the vociferous few and saying “oh we must send them all back”*’ (Interview 16 England). When supporting a campaign, MPs or parliamentary candidates commonly focused on the specificity of the particular case they supported, as opposed to defending all asylum-seekers.

Campaigners concurred to stress how important large-scale community support was to secure MPs’ involvement. Thus, while national concerns were first articulated by MPs to justify their reluctance to getting involved, local concerns often meant that MPs finally agreed to support a campaign. Exerting pressure through community support proved in most instances particularly effective: *‘I think [the MP accepted to get involved] when he realised that an awful lot of people were interested’* (Interview 23 England). According to campaigners, this was especially true in marginal constituencies⁹⁶, where none of the prospective candidates wanted to “miss out” on a popular campaign that could bring them some helpful publicity.

The story of Ed Matt provides an interesting insight into the highly political tension between local and national concerns. As the Conservative candidate in South Dorset – England’s most marginal seat for the 2005

⁹⁶ A marginal constituency is a constituency in which the distribution of party support is relatively evenly balanced so that the incumbent party has a narrow majority and a small net movement of voters will lead to its changing hands.

General Elections – he decided to support a family from Malawi who benefited from large-scale community support. He was pictured holding a photo of the family during a support action (see Figure 5.1) alongside Ann Widdecombe holding a placard ‘Let them Stay’. Matts was welcomed by supporters for lending political weight to the campaign. However, during the subsequent election campaign, his photo was then doctored for the purpose of a Conservative Party Leaflet to better fit the Conservative Party’s line on immigration (see Figure 5.2): Ed Matts was seen holding a placard stating ‘Controlled Immigration’. This confirms the tensions apparent in MPs’ reluctance to get involved based on party political concerns, but bowing under local pressure or attracted by the political gains to be made at the local level.

Figure 5.1: Ed Matt at the protest **Figure 5.2: Picture doctored to**
against the deportation of a feature on the Conservative
family⁹⁷ **leaflet for the General**
Elections⁹⁸



⁹⁷ From the Guardian (<http://www.guardian.co.uk/politics/2005/apr/12/election2005.uk1>)

⁹⁸ From the Guardian (<http://www.guardian.co.uk/politics/2005/apr/12/election2005.uk1>)

In other instances, well-connected campaigners made use of their personal contacts to gain political support. A campaigner explained how she emailed an old friend of hers, the Labour candidate for her constituency, and managed to get her to support the campaign: *'I emailed her personally through Facebook, it wasn't, you know, to her office, it was just a personal email. I've known her for years, and that was certainly very useful'* (Interview 28 England).

The degree of support shown by an MP for a family differed depending on the local context and the local MP's own agenda and interests. At minima MPs agreed to make a representation to the Home Office but without further involvement. In some cases, MPs accepted to hold public meetings and be interviewed in the press in support of a family. In other cases, however, MPs went far beyond what could have been expected of them. For instance, some Labour MPs disregarded their own party affiliation and rebelled against the Government's positioning: *'He raised it as a question in the House of Parliament against his own government! I think he did take it very seriously, and I believe on that one he tried his best really'* (Interview 21 England).

In France, by contrast, migrant families and campaigners were primarily in contact with city politicians, in particular the mayor and local councillors, in the day-to-day campaigning activities. In France, the mayor, as the elected representative of the city council, has important administrative duties, in contrast to the honorific title generally associated with mayors in England. Their role in regularisation procedures is likely to be influent, to the extent that regularisations take place at the level of the Département and not at the national level.

Contrary to England, there was no expectation that politicians would necessarily agree to support campaigns. However, as I show in Chapter 8, Section 1, mayors and local councillors were key to the Réseau Education sans Frontières' strategy of securing institutional support, as they presided upon 'republican sponsorships'. In cases where city politicians agreed to get involved, campaigners highlighted the positive impact that their involvement had: *'C'est bien que la mairie s'investisse là-dedans, ça c'est très bien, parce que par contre les élus, euh, entre guillemets, sont utiles'*⁹⁹ (Interview 17 France). Among participants, many mentioned the key role played by local councillors, relying upon a greater freedom than city mayors. In some cases, conservative mayors and councillors agreed to support campaigns, but mainly through personal connections:

*Alors le truc auquel on ne croyait pas, le maire de la ville, qui est UMP, a écrit à la préfecture en demandant la régularisation de la famille! C'est lié au fait qu'on a une maman d'élèves au collège qui s'est sentie concernée parce que sa fille était copine avec et qu'elle est au Conseil Municipal.*¹⁰⁰ (Interview 27 France)

Indeed, as in England, personal connections were an effective way to ensure politicians' involvement and a successful outcome to campaigning activities. Mayors and councillors belonging to the Conservative party showed much greater readiness to support campaigns if they benefited from large-scale

⁹⁹ It's good that the mairie gets involved, it's really good, because elected politicians are really useful! (Interview 17 France)

¹⁰⁰ So the thing we would have never imagined happening happened: The city mayor, who belongs to the UMP, wrote to the prefecture asking for the regularisation of the family! It was mainly due to the fact that the mother of a secondary school pupil felt concerned by the issue because her daughter was close friend with the child, and she is a local councillor [so she got the mayor's ear]! (Interview 27 France)

local support, as they did not want to go against the general opinion of the population.

Role of solicitors

Solicitors and legal representatives were often mentioned by participants during interviews. While they rarely played a role in campaigning, their work strongly shaped campaigners' activities. Overall, all participants in France and England resented the lack of money available to ensure proper legal representation during administrative proceedings and court hearings.

The majority of English campaigners complained about the level of legal aid provided by solicitors, except those directly chosen by the campaigning group together with the family. One main common criticism was legal representatives' prime interest in money-making as opposed to defending asylum-seekers: *'And I think some of these solicitors, they get legal aid, and they are happy to take the money but they don't even provide adequate advice at all'* (Interview 30 England). They strongly criticised the constraints imposed by the Government on solicitors¹⁰¹ and the negative impact it had on the profession generally. This was also a concern mentioned by some French campaigners, but on a considerably smaller scale. French campaigners also expressed concerns at the constraints that legal representatives had to bear, relating in particular to the fact that a few well-trained immigration lawyers' were bearing the burden of most cases: *y a un*

¹⁰¹ Asylum seekers whose claims are refused by the Home Office should be granted legal aid for their appeal provided their claim has at least a 50 per cent chance of success. But solicitors who take on too many unsuccessful claimants can lose their contract with the Legal Services Commission.

*pool d'avocat qui connaît bien ce type de problème sauf qu'ils sont débordés*¹⁰² (Interview 25 France).

Supporters identified the crucial importance of securing good legal representatives to defend families, especially in emergency situations. Community support often enabled families to access good solicitors, through solidarity donations or by relying on personal connections:

I happened to speak to my dad about different possibilities and he suggested a barrister. I just randomly emailed her really and she immediately rang me and said 'yeah I'll take you, I'll take it straight away' it was quite amazing really. (Interview 25 England)

In France, local RESF committees were able to share information on lawyers, which included lists of lawyers as well as information of recurrent negative collaborations with legal representatives. Such sharing of information contributed to making individual campaigners more aware of potentially detrimental solicitors: *'La petite D. elle a une avocate qui est sur notre liste noire chez RESF, donc je lui ai dit "faut qu'on change!"'*¹⁰³ (Interview 21 France).

The Church as a micromobilisation context in England

The Church is the last actor considered in this section. In England, out of the fifteen campaigns investigated, four had a strong religious dimension. In these four cases, schools, as faith schools, had formal links with a church.

¹⁰² A pool of lawyers is very knowledgeable about these issues, but they are completely overwhelmed (Interview 25 France).

¹⁰³ The young D. has a lawyer who is on our black list at RESF. So I told her 'we need to change lawyer' (Interview 21 France).

As a result, in these groups, the school and the church community strongly overlapped, and churches provided a further micromobilisation context (McAdam, 1988):

When I joined the campaign, I guessed the first thing we needed to do was to consolidate that group into one effort and we did that through the church because we realised that we had a ready audience within the Church, people who were friends with the family, who were going to Church. (Interview 16 England)

In such instances, parishioners heard about the family situation through prayer meetings and priest orations. Local church leaders agreed to take part in mobilisations to prevent family deportations, confirming churches' involvement in support of moral causes in England. According to a priest involved in support of a family whom I interviewed, this involvement was primarily triggered by the family belonging to the church community: *'It was the community dimension, it wasn't just somebody who lived in our area, it was a member of our family'* (Interview 21 England). Churches thus constituted alternative or complementary micromobilisation contexts.

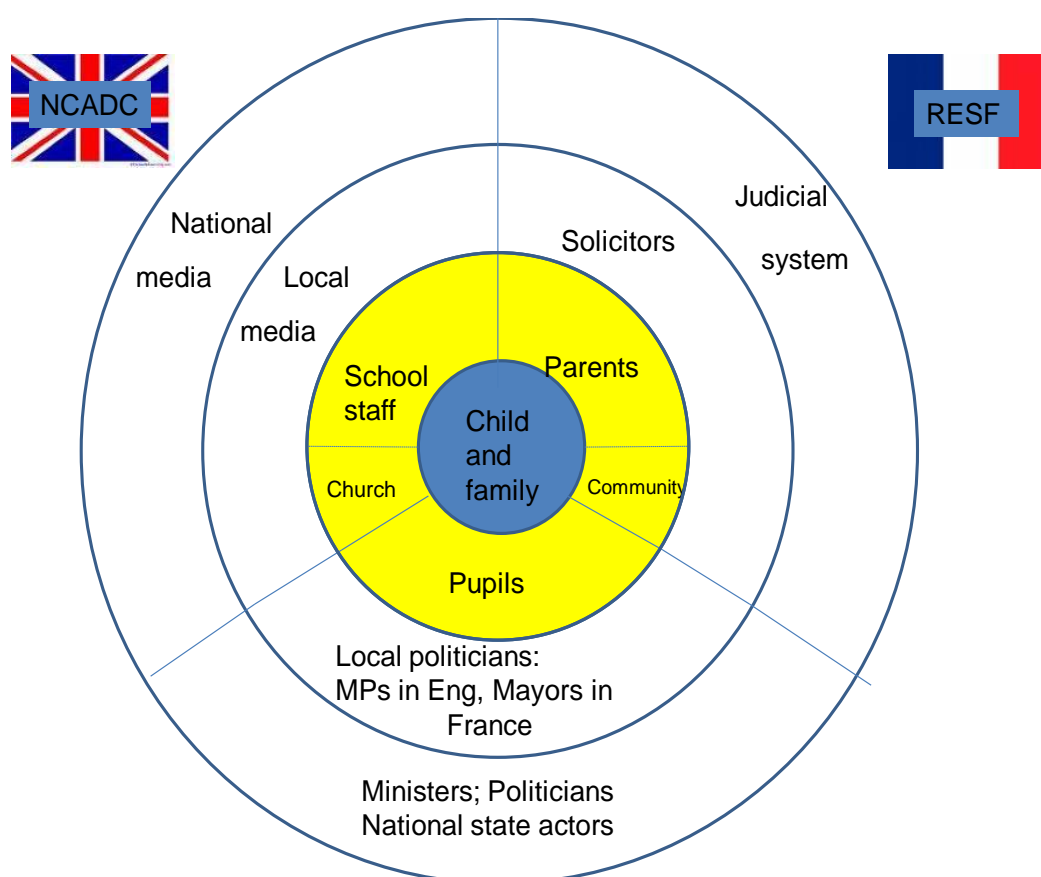
It is interesting to note that churches do not feature among key local actors identified by campaigners in France, which confirms results from the political claims-making analysis. Some campaigners mentioned the involvement of church actors, but on an ad-hoc basis and without open involvement of 'the Church'. Furthermore, it is worth noting that none of the campaigns studied took place in Catholic schools in France. I asked some of the campaigners long involved with RESF whether they knew of Catholic schools having mobilised in support of a family. Interviews confirmed the

absence of such campaigns. The main explanation for such absence relates to the obligation to pay fees to attend a catholic school in France, which might act as an obstacle for families on low income. Additionally, RESF campaigners strongly rejected any involvement of confessional organisations within RESF activities. Participants justified their strong opposition in these terms: *‘C’est un facteur de division là parce que c’est quelque chose de personnel, alors chacun la vit, ceux qui même sont de religion identique ne la vivent pas de la même manière’*¹⁰⁴ (Interview 12 France). Such opposition was largely due to the strong laic identity of actors involved within the movement. They expressed no opposition, however, to parallel church sponsored activities in support of undocumented migrants. Another explanation for such absence might result from the internal changes of the Catholic church, which resulted in the ‘embourgeoisement’ of Catholic ‘activists’ and thereby might have put an end to typical practices (Sawicki and Siméant, 2009).

Having considered important local secondary actors, I will now turn to the support provided by actors involved at the meso- and macro-level in France and England. I will focus in particular on the major role of the RESF in France as a mobilising structure (McAdam et al., 1996b). I subsequently consider the role of common mobilising structures in England with regard to grassroots mobilisation against child deportations.

¹⁰⁴ Religion is a factor of division, because it’s a personal issue. Even people who share the same religion don’t experience it in the same way (Interview 12 France).

Figure 5.3: Main actors identified in the analysis



5.3 Mobilising structures at meso- and macro-level in France and England

I have highlighted in the previous two sections the high degree of similarities in the structure and dynamics of mobilisation at the local level in France and England. However, differences become clearly apparent when comparing mobilising structures at the meso- and macro-level, that is, formal or informal organisations to which local campaigning groups could turn to.

The RESF as a mobilising structure in France: The key role of mesomobilisation actors and online networking

The Réseau Education Sans Frontières was established on 26 June 2004, following several grassroots mobilisations in support of young people over 18 attending high school and threatened with removal. RESF's constitution as a national network relied heavily on the involvement of key activists long involved in trade unions and political parties:

*Il y a cette 'légende rose' de RESF qui dit que ce sont des citoyens qui ont été subitement confrontés à la situation dramatique de familles 'sans papiers'. Mais, même s'il y a du vrai là-dedans, il faut savoir que c'est quand même une affaire de militants qui se connaissent au départ.*¹⁰⁵ (Interview 18 France)

These long-time political activists drew upon their contacts developed during their previous militancy to promote campaigning in support of undocumented families. In particular, they relied upon their trade union and political networks nationwide to further the appeal of their cause. These highly politicised

¹⁰⁵ There is this pink legend at RESF that suggests that RESF is about citizens being suddenly confronted with the dramatic situation of undocumented families. But, even if there is some truth to it, it has to be said that it's something led by activists who knew each other (Interview 18 France).

campaigners were ultimately successful in attracting support from national teachers' unions, pro-migrant and human-rights organisations and parents' associations, alongside pre-existing local committees supporting families and young people. The main teachers' trade unions unanimously condemned deportations of school children and officially endorsed RESF's activities. So did the left-leaning Federation of school parents' councils, the biggest school parents' association in France counting 300,000 members (Fédération des Conseils de Parents d'Elèves, 2010). Specialised pro-migrant organisations, such as the GISTI and Cimade, provided expert advice and acted as brokers between the RESF network and institutional actors or immigration lawyers.

Campaigners followed three main goals in setting up RESF in 2004:

- (a) Defining child deportations as a social problem to be raised nationally
- (b) Creating and reinforcing local committees supporting children and families
- (c) Recruiting non-activists at the local level.

Defining child deportations as a social problem nationally: a bottom-up approach

When asked about the rationale for such a network, actors involved in setting up RESF in 2004 referred to the strategic dimension of such a network to transform a commonly local problem – schools, neighbourhoods and communities fighting against the removal of a family – into a national social problem. Individual campaigners had been struck by the massive local reactions to young people threatened with deportation and wanted to use this local potential to further the cause nationally. Following meetings between grassroots campaigners, it was agreed that a national network would help

towards 'nationalising' this social problem, as explained by one of those involved in setting up the network: *'Cette indignation elle est locale, et donc l'idée qu'est venue, c'est de dire "ben on fait du foin sur tout ça et puis on essaie de faire apparaître la chose au niveau national"'*¹⁰⁶ (Interview 14 France). It was their view that debates around children and young people would in the long term open up to debates on the wider group of undocumented migrants (see Chapter 8). Through the set up of a network, campaigners hoped to facilitate long term activities and thus prevent short-lived committees or collectives – which, until then, had been a common pattern of 'sans-papiers' mobilisations in France (Blin, 2000).

It can therefore be argued that the set up of RESF as a national network is the result of a strategy developed by resourceful activists who relied upon extensive knowledge and experience of activism. Experienced activists were highly instrumental in structuring the national bottom-up movement based on local committees campaigning on behalf of local families and young people threatened with removal.

Reinforcing existing local committees and supporting the creation of new committees

The second main aim pursued by activists involved in setting up RESF was for RESF to act as a mobilising structure (McAdam et al., 1996b) to provide support to and advise newly-created local committees fighting against the removal of a family. Campaigners wanted to avoid the multiplication of

¹⁰⁶ This outrage is local, so the idea that came to light was: we raise the alarm on these issues, and we try to raise the issue at the national level (Interview 14 France).

isolated local struggles, focusing instead on linking up individual campaigning groups to achieve social change:

*Au début ... je me disais 'putain, on va monter RESF, tous les comités locaux vont se mettre ensemble'. Effectivement, j'avais raison, c'est ce qu'on a fait et j'ai été bien participant dans ce coup là. Et c'est vrai que maintenant quand on voit ce qu'on est capable de faire, mobiliser et tout ce qu'on a fait changer.*¹⁰⁷ (Interview 25 France)

In France, the RESF network, at local, regional and national level, was the backbone of most local mobilisations in France, providing both information on campaigning activities and legal support. French participants all mentioned the 'network' as the main source of information and the first port of call when confronted with a family threatened with deportation. This considerably helped mitigating potential obstacles to mobilisation for individual campaigning groups. Such mentoring of newly created committees and on-going support was facilitated by two main factors: the presence of 'mesomobilisation' actors (Gerhards and Rucht, 1992) and the virtual network provided by electronic mailing lists and websites.

As mentioned earlier, some of the activists involved in founding RESF were themselves involved in campaigning against the deportation of children and young people at a local level. They thus had the experience and knowledge acquired through campaigning. Furthermore the bulk of local RESF committees appeared in 2006, following the exceptional regularisation

¹⁰⁷ At the beginning, I was thinking to myself 'God, we are going to set up RESF, and all the local committees are going to come together'. And as it is, I was right, that's what we did. And I have been well involved into all this. And now, when we see what we are able to do, mobilise, and everything we have been able to influence. (Interview 25 France)

undertaken by Nicolas Sarkozy, the then Interior Minister (see Chapter 6). Individuals and groups interested in setting up a local committee in 2006 were thus able to rely on the knowledge of local RESF committees set up since 2004. In some areas the multiplication of local committees resulted in the establishment of regional 'steering groups' in charge of coordinating RESF activities at a meso-level. Some of these experienced campaigners and local committees thus acted as mesomobilisation actors (Gerhards and Rucht, 1992), motivating and mobilising new local committees. New committees could turn to these actors for advice and support and, thanks to these connections, were directly connected to pre-existing committees and included within the wider RESF network. These mesomobilisation actors came to be equated with the RESF network, as indicated by the following quote by a campaigner running a campaign at the local level, stressing the key role played by such a mesomobilisation actor:

C'était avec l'aide du réseau, hein, moi j'étais vraiment en lien avec le réseau là parce que j'étais un peu perdue de toute manière. J'étais en lien avec M., que j'avais jamais vue. Donc à ce moment là, on s'appelait tous les jours, voire deux fois par jour pour savoir où on en était, ce qu'on faisait. Faire un communiqué de presse, les liens avec la presse, ça c'était des choses, même si j'en avais conscience, c'était des choses [que je ne savais pas faire]. Elle était là pour me dire 'bon bah voilà, il faut faire ci, il faut faire ça' Donc après je faisais le lien avec l'école en disant 'il faut

*qu'on aille voir Mr B., qui vient, quel jour? Il faut l'appeler.*¹⁰⁸

(Interview 28 France)

Mesomobilisation actors, such as the one described in the previous quote, were often first involved in support of a family at the local level. But the knowledge they acquired and their understanding of the need to expand the movement led them to mobilise at a meso-level rather than micro-level, as explained by a primary school teacher previously involved in support of a family:

*Après par rapport à d'autres familles, je me suis pas impliqué de cette façon. Par rapport à d'autres familles, j'essayais de les aider à trouver autour d'elles un comité comme le nôtre. Notre truc, ça a été d'aller dans les écoles et de dire 'Bon ben voilà comment on a monté notre comité, voilà ce qui faut faire.'*¹⁰⁹ (Interview 25 France).

Those experienced in campaigning in support of a family thus very often ended up helping set up other committees. Such support, in their opinion, provided the opportunity to further expand the movement:

Le fait d'aider à la construction d'un collectif sur une école, c'est un peu un investissement, mais c'est aussi un retour sur investissement parce qu'on est plus nombreux à être sensibilisés

¹⁰⁸ It was thanks to the 'network's' help. I was really linking up with the network, because I was a bit lost. I was in touch with M., who I had never seen. ... So, at the time, we were calling each other every day, at times twice a day to know what we were at, what we should be doing. Preparing a press release, linking up with the media, these were really things – even though I was aware of – these were things [I had no idea how to tackle]. She was there to tell me 'you have to do this, you have to do that'. So afterwards, I was going back to my school telling them 'we have to go and see Mr. B. Who is coming? Which day? We have to call'. (Interview 28 France)

¹⁰⁹ Now, with regard to other families, I haven't got involved in the same way. With other families, I was trying to help them find around them a committee similar to the one we had set up [for the first family]. ... Our thing was to go to schools and say 'That's the way we set up our committee, here is what you have to do' (Interview 25 France).

*à la question, parce que quand on fait une manif, euh, pour une famille, ben on a plus de chances, au lieu d'être cinq d'être 10, et pour signer une pétition au lieu d'avoir 300 personnes, on en a 600 qui la signent.*¹¹⁰ (Interview 15 France)

Such support was of great reassurance for 'affective' campaigners with no previous experience of activism.

A large number of these mesomobilisation actors were able to acquire such a central role thanks to the indirect help of trade unions. Among the mesomobilisation actors interviewed, six benefited from part-time trade union mandates to specifically deal with matters arising in the frame of RESF. Trade union mandates are usually meant to enable representatives to cater for the needs of union members. However, RESF mesomobilisation actors were allowed to use their free time to deal with issues arising in the frame of RESF. Interviewees stressed the fact that contrary to common rivalries between individual unions, unions had been able to unite on the issue of undocumented children. In particular, some mesomobilisation actors whose union did not provide them with a discharge were able to benefit from a discharge provided by another union. As acknowledged by a mesomobilisation actor below, such inter-union solidarity is rare:

En 2006-2007, j'avais une décharge syndicale du SNU donc mon syndicat et cette année, j'ai une décharge syndicale d'un autre syndicat parce qu'au SNU, ils ne voulaient pas m'en donner une. Donc je suis toujours syndiquée au SNU mais j'ai une décharge

¹¹⁰ Helping towards setting up a committee in a school is a bit of an investment, but it also provides clear return on investment because we are many more to be sensitised to the issue. When we go on a protest, for a family for instance, rather than being five, we'll be ten, and when it comes to signing a petition, rather than having 300 signatures, there are 600 people signing it. (Interview 15 France)

de SUD. Je crois qu'on est les seuls quand même à faire bosser tous les syndicats ensemble sans que ça pose problème. C'est vrai qu'on ne ramène jamais la couverture à nos syndicats, parce qu'on n'est pas là pour ça, on s'en fiche! (Interview 20 France)

As a result, though playing a rather secondary role in the actual decision-making process within RESF, trade unions largely contributed to RESF's activities by providing such resources. In that sense they truly acted as 'mobilising structures'.

Alongside mesomobilisation actors, a second source of support was provided by the numerous mailing lists and the RESF website, which proved key to the 'empowerment' of individual committees and local campaigners. Campaigners highlighted the crucial role played by the internet in providing them with the tools to communicate with any RESF supporter around France. When asked how they acquired knowledge or helped a family out of a difficult situation, campaigners emphasised the key role of mailing lists and websites: *'C'est vrai que quand on sait plus trop quoi faire ou qu'on n'a pas la réponse à quelque chose, il suffit de mettre sur la liste internet. C'est vraiment un réseau, c'est vraiment ça le réseau'*¹¹¹ (Interview 6 France). The awareness that another campaigner might have the answer to a specific question somewhere around France constituted a source of comfort for individual actors: Campaigners knew that they could resort to the internet if none of their fellow campaigners were able to help them. The online network worked therefore alongside the local network and was called upon whenever local

¹¹¹ It's true that when we don't know anymore what to do or that we don't have an answer to something, we just put something on the mailing list. It's truly a network, truly a network (Interview 6 France).

actors were not available or unable to help. RESF's success has thus been predicated upon its ability to link up, mainly through the internet but also through local, regional and national networks, campaigners that would not have known each other otherwise.

A loose structure to facilitate involvement

Most campaigners within RESF, as in many social movement organisations (Nepstad and Clifford, 2006), opposed any kind of hierarchical structure and instead favoured consensus-based decision-making processes. For long-time political campaigners, this starkly contrasted with their experience of trade unions or political parties: *'C'est un aspect important dans notre combat. Ce n'est pas une organisation pyramidale. C'est une organisation concentrique... et nous sommes des cercles et les cercles sont imbriqués les uns dans les autres'*¹¹² (Interview 12 France). For first-timers, the network structure provided an alternative to committing to an ideological or political organisation. The network offered a greater level of freedom and independence than involvement within a formal organisation. Those wary of being drawn into 'politics', and therefore not involved in a union or a party, particularly appreciated such freedom:

En étant dans le réseau, j'adhère pas à une idéologie. ... Et moi ça me convient bien, parce que je trouve que c'est intéressant de

¹¹² It's an important aspect of our fight. RESF is not a pyramidal organisation. It's a concentric organisation. And we are circles, and these circles overlap with each other (Interview 12 France).

*pouvoir avoir une certaine liberté par rapport à tout ça et quand t'es pas d'accord tu dis 'merde'.*¹¹³ (Interview 28 France)

Local committees were autonomous and free to choose their own strategy to support families and young people: *'On peut faire des choses localement sans avoir à demander l'autorisation à 50000 personnes et si on a envie de faire des trucs, on les fait'*¹¹⁴ (Interview 15 France). Research participants identified the absence of formal accountability as a key factor for involvement and sustained participation:

*Ce n'est pas une association, ce n'est pas une organisation, c'est un réseau et que ça change TOUT! T'es pas chapeauté. Et c'est ce qui m'attire aussi là dedans, voilà, c'est que y a pas de comptes à rendre, tu vois.*¹¹⁵ (Interview 3 France)

It is especially interesting to note that such comments were expressed by actors in different localities and with very different opinions and degrees of involvement. This highlights the strength of this instrumental frame and its centrality to RESF campaigners' sense of collective identity. However, as in many social movement organisations, such a loose structure was often challenged by some RESF campaigners, in particular those carrying the burden of being 'perceived' as leaders by outsiders. There were numerous debates around the need to structure the network. Such hierarchisation was, however, consistently opposed by a majority of RESF campaigners, as the

¹¹³ The fact that I'm in the network doesn't mean that I'm subscribing to any ideology. ... And that suits me well. I find it good to be able to have some freedom from all that, and when you disagree, you just say 'f.ck' (Interview 28 France).

¹¹⁴ We can do things locally without having to ask 50,000 people for authorisation. And if we want to do something, we do it (Interview 15 France).

¹¹⁵ It's not an association, it's not an organisation, it's a network and that changes EVERYTHING! You're not overseen by anybody. And that's what attracts me, you are not accountable to anybody, you see (Interview 3 France).

absence of hierarchy was perceived as constitutive of RESF's collective identity.

Relative isolation of individual campaigning groups in England

Those campaigns haven't joined up, we haven't seen the emergence of any kind of national leadership or sustained development that has been able to unite those campaigns.

(Interview 12 England)

This statement by one key informant in England deplores the absence of a national movement in support of families liable to removal in England which could have acted as a mobilising structure similar to RESF in France. My data suggests that most local campaigning groups were primarily embedded locally and had relatively weak ties to pro-migrant organisations, while benefiting little from the support of unions or children's charities.

A primarily local embeddedness heightened by the lack of network

When first confronted with a threatening situation, campaigning groups mobilised networks in which they were embedded, mostly at the local level. As mentioned in the previous sections, English campaigning groups were more prone than RESF committees to contact their MPs in first instance. Additionally, they contacted individuals or organisations with whom they interacted on a regular basis and shared a sense of collective identity, such as the diocese for Catholic schools, trade unions for unionised teachers, the vicar for Church of England schools, etc. According to one of the key informants, local embeddedness also acted as an obstacle to networking with

campaigning groups in other localities because local campaigners felt that their experience was not transferable:

A lot depends on who the person is who is taking it up. I mean if they're trade unionists, personally, they are likely to go through a trade-union and get advice. ... Teachers tend to think about the local much more. So in somewhere like Plymouth, they're gonna think 'London, whatever they tell us, doesn't apply exactly'.

(Interview 11 England)

I thus identified no uniform pattern to seek support and advice. In particular, most campaigning groups failed to build links with other schools and communities involved in a similar struggle. According to the previous quote, such lack of contact might have been due to campaigners' suspicion that local contexts were too different to share experiences.

However, campaigners mentioned first and foremost the practical difficulty of linking up with other schools: *'It's quite difficult to try to work out who we can contact in schools to try to work out if they had some more experiences, if they want to support us'* (Interview 25 England). My data thus indicates that grassroots campaigners generally suffered from the absence of mesomobilisation actors who would have linked up local groups both organisationally and ideologically. In the absence of contact with other campaigning groups, individual groups had little awareness that their concerns were shared by other teachers and parents around the country. A teacher and member of the National Union of Teachers (NUT) recollected how she was surprised to learn at an NUT meeting that the pupil at her school was not an isolated case:

When I mentioned it at the meeting, there were other teachers there who said 'oh we've got the same thing at our school' ... and you know I realised that they were lots of teachers who are in the same position as we are. (Interview 28 England)

This made them look into the possibility of setting up a network: *'We all said to each other "wouldn't it be very good if there was some kind of network so that we could support each other and share our experiences and things like that"'* (Interview 28 England).

My data does indicate that most participants were willing to share their experience with other less experienced campaigners. Upon hearing about a new campaign locally, interviewees approached new campaigning groups, keen to give advice to facilitate the process:

When an email was sent out about what was going on in B. school, the first thing I did was email back and say 'I've already done this, I've done that for K., do you want any help, do you want any advice?' And the lady who was running it there, I think she appreciated it. (Interview 15 England)

However, in the absence of a structured network, this willingness to provide support was mainly reactive and according to the good-will of experienced campaigners and their awareness of specific campaigns. New campaigning groups were not able to proactively contact schools who had previously campaigned against a family's deportation. When asked how campaigning could be made easier, teachers and parents thus all expressed an interest in exchanging practices and sharing experiences through a network: *'I think it would be very valuable. At least particularly initially to see how the schools*

have done it and what kind of things they have done to support the families' (Interview 25 England). My data thus points towards a clear networking potential in England.

It is interesting to note that the Institute of Race Relations (IRR), together with unionists, refugee activists and teachers, attempted to launch such a network of schools and teachers against child deportations – Schools against Deportations. The 'Declaration on the deportation of children and young people from schools/colleges under Immigration Act powers' was launched in 2005 calling for those working in the education system to oppose deportation orders affecting children and young people at school or college. The IRR first launched a website in 2000 that introduced stories of school-based campaigns launched to fight against the removal of pupils. The aim behind this website was to provide information for schools confronted with the case of a child at risk of removal. Following some teachers' feedback and expression of interest, it was decided to transform this website into a platform supporting a wider network of schools. Two meetings took place with teachers, activists and refugees to launch the Schools against deportations' network, but it never came to life. However, some of the participants indicated having used information on the Schools against Deportations website. Some attempted to enter in contact with coordinators, but did not receive a reply. I review in the following subsections some of the obstacles to setting up a national network.

Weak ties to pre-existing pro-migrant organisations

Most campaigning groups investigated had weak ties to the National Coalition of Anti-Deportation Campaigns (NCADC). NCADC was set up in 1995 by campaigners and supporters to jointly campaign with those facing deportation to oppose forced removals. NCADC has aimed to provide practical help and advice to people facing deportation and their supporters. Few mentioned NCADC as the first organisation contacted for support. Those who had previous knowledge of NCADC's existence or came across the website used their website when organising campaigning activities. Individual campaigning groups' relationships with NCADC also depended on the period of campaigning activities. Some of the campaigning groups in the Manchester area benefited from in-depth support by one dedicated NCADC worker. However, the Manchester-based office subsequently shut down. As a result, more recent campaigning groups did not benefit from such support. Similarly, the London office closed in 2005, which had a similar effect. Overall, this organisation was viewed by interviewees as an outside organisation, rather than a network in which they were embedded. There was an understanding that because of limited resources, NCADC was only in a position to give some advice by email and advertise individual campaigns at a national level. The lack of direct involvement and focus on ad-hoc advice may have prevented the creation of a sense of collective identity. Furthermore, some interviewees resented what they felt was a more radical positioning than what they were ready to commit to: *'I mean because the one group, they were saying stuff like "you could board the plane" and stuff like that'* (Interview 21 England).

Also, campaigners mentioned splits and ideological differences among pro-migrant campaigners as another obstacle to obtaining support. In their opinion, the ideological positioning of activists advocating for an end to immigration controls undermined school-based campaigning activities by opposing campaigns on compassionate grounds:

There are some people like No Borders or Steve Cohen at that end of the spectrum, who actually have at times actively attacked school-based campaigns because they were campaigning for individual refugees, on kind of humanitarian arguments. You have got young people involved, fighting for some kind of justice you know, and they are deploying arguments that might allow someone's life to be saved. And you have this kind of bizarre ultra-left sort of purist standpoint: 'Actually you're doing the wrong sort of campaigning, you should be demanding an end to all immigration barriers!' (Interview 12 England)

This had local repercussions as some campaigners were confronted with opposition by activists reluctant to using compassionate arguments: *'It's quite strange because within the campaign, there was quite a battle, sometimes a bitter and acrimonious battle around you know positions about immigration controls'* (Interview 19 England).

Absence of Unions as mobilising structures

The unions, in particular the main teachers' union, the NUT, never prioritised the issue and therefore did not necessarily provide the back-up needed by individual campaigning groups. In England, trade unionists expressed

frustration over the lack of willingness of unions' representatives to get involved in such matters. During meetings, some campaigners were told that the detention and deportations of children was not a priority. Similarly, when trying to secure support from trade unions, campaigners were often confronted with reluctant reactions:

The NUT is like the largest teachers' union. I think it's the only union that people who are real activists would be in. But I think it's still pretty shockingly awful. I mean we did get the General Secretary at the time to write a letter. But it was all very much an uphill struggle to try and keep bombarding people with requests and I kind of sometimes felt. It's just like if you annoy them enough, they might say 'ok we'll write a letter' but it was never really proactive. (Interview 19 England)

According to some campaigners, this constituted a main obstacle to the mutualisation of information through networking. Such comments confirm studies discussing English Teacher Unions' endeavour to solely focus on issues pertaining to their profession (Stevenson, 2007, 2008), while remaining as little politically challenging as possible (Brisard and Malet, 2004; Stevenson, 2008). By contrast, French teachers' unions have generally been concerned with broader political and social issues – including campaigns marginal to school reform (Adam, 1982). Furthermore, unionised interviewees generally viewed unions' lack of action as partly resulting from their proximity to the Labour party: *'UNISON is connected to Labour. Some of the money that UNISON receives from us goes to Labour. They [the union] don't like it if you rock the boat either'* (Interview 30 England). Beyond the

role of unions, the Labour Party was seen as having a detrimental impact on social mobilisations, which confirms results from Chapter 4. One of the key informants thus stressed *'the deadening role of the Labour party in stifling the development of movements, and making sure that the political and transformative potential around asylum issues is limited* (Interview 12 England).

Lack of links between child welfare NGOs and grassroots campaigning activities

In a prior research project, I focused on the important role played by large children's charities and refugee organisations in lobbying on policies relating to asylum-seeking children (Giner, 2006, 2007). In particular, the Refugee Children's Consortium (RCC) was set up to defend and promote the welfare of asylum-seeking and refugee children in 1998 (Giner, 2006). Building bridges between well-known mainstream children's charities and relatively marginalised refugee organisations, the RCC became influential with politicians of all three parties in Britain. The RCC was able to draw on children's charities' considerable resources, expertise in lobbying and longstanding connections with politicians (Browne, 1996; Dobrowolsky, 2002). Thanks to its child-centred argumentation, the RCC indeed managed to attract the interest of parliamentarians with longstanding connections to children's organisations (Interview 8 England).

However, none of the interviewees involved in grassroots campaigns, not even those involved in setting up the School against Deportations' network, were aware of the existence of the RCC, and none of them

indicated having benefited from advice provided by children's charities involved with the RCC. According to one of the key informants, such absence of links resulted from children's organisations' failure to understand the potential represented by such campaigning activities: *'The NGOs that work on children's rights issues, they have not picked up that this [grassroots campaigning] actually might be an important way of empowering young people and realising their rights'* (Interview 12 England). Organisations involved in the RCC focused considerably more on lobbying parliamentarians and the Government, rather than influencing the public: *It's difficult to predict what if any impact on public perception our campaign around detention of children will have. I think it's much more likely to have an impact on decision makers* (Interview 8 England). Browne (1996) similarly focused on the discrepancy between large-scale children's charities and grassroots survivors' organisations on the issue of child abuse. She showed how 'the majority of the charities' efforts are still largely directed at responding to government initiatives' (Browne, 1996: 41), while survivors' organisations focus on challenging societal attitudes.

Such large structures could have potentially provided resources and information, relating in particular to effective campaigning tactics. The RCC is indeed experienced in strategically framing arguments to make them culturally and politically relevant, in a drive to present asylum-seeking children as 'children first and foremost' (Giner, 2007). We will see in Chapter 8 that local campaigners had very similar concerns, and could have potentially benefited from such experience in lobbying and campaigning. However, the participant quoted above indicated that these large

organisations' financial dependence on the State for funding and concerns relating to their reputation might have triggered such a dissociation from grassroots campaigns, thereby confirming findings from the literature (Browne, 1996).

It is crucial to be aware of these considerable differences between France and England. Indeed the presence of RESF as a mobilising structure in France played a catalytic role in organising local mobilisations and considerably affected both individual participants' reasons for sustaining involvement (Chapter 7) and the campaigning strategies devised (Chapter 8).

Conclusions

In this chapter, I have looked at the structure and dynamics of mobilisations at the local level, and the extent to which campaigning groups relied upon support external to the core group of campaigners. In the first section I highlighted the critical role played by schools as micromobilisation contexts in both France and England, which considerably helped in facilitating and structuring collective action. Second, two main recruitment pathways were identified. A large subset of participants was recruited through direct or indirect social ties with a child or young person threatened with deportation. I described this group as 'affective' campaigners. However, I also interviewed participants who did not acknowledge any previous links to the child or family they supported. This second set of interviewees all had in common to be long-time activists, recruited into campaigning precisely for their experience

or pro-actively offering their support, thus referred to as ‘political campaigners’.

In the second section, I considered campaigning groups’ relationships to local actors that were repeatedly mentioned by individual participants. In France, and to a greater extent in England, participants stressed the importance of securing media and politicians’ support at the local level. This was either achieved through personal connections or large-scale local mobilisation.

In the last section, I considered how campaigning groups relied on ‘mobilising structures’ at the meso- and macro-level. I showed that, while local groups in France widely relied on mesomobilisation actors within RESF and on the RESF mailing lists, individual campaigning groups in England were relatively isolated, relying on weak ties with pre-existing pro-migrant organisations, unions or children’s charities. The situation in both countries is best summarised by the following table.

Table 5.1: Multiple levels of involvement against child deportations

	France	England
Micro-level	Multiple cases of local mobilisations: locally anchored, mainly school-based mobilisations supported by diverse local actors (teachers, pupils, community members, local politicians)	
Meso-level	Emergence of mesomobilisation actors within RESF in charge of mobilising and supporting local committees Role of RESF mailing lists in supporting local committees and individual campaigners	Weak ties with NCADC (in particular absence of face to face interactions) Lack of involvement of unions' representatives Absence of ties with the RCC or its member organisations
Macro-level	Loose coalition: RESF Network Primary objective: campaigning	Close-knit coalition of large organisations: Refugee Children's Consortium (RCC) Primary objective: Lobbying

While social ties, networks and mobilising structures strongly contributed to organising and structuring collective action, they, on their own, do not fully explain actors' involvement in support of children and families threatened with deportation. My data shows that another aspect, namely the outrage and shock resulting from state policies and practices, was key to spurring actors into campaigning, thereby confirming previous studies highlighting the role of such cognitive and emotional reactions (Jasper and Poulsen, 1995). This will be considered in the next chapter.

Chapter Six: Participants' individual reasons for involvement

Studies on social movement generally concentrate on conscious movement processes to produce the motivation and incentives needed for action, as I have shown in Chapter 2. While the strategic construction of meaning is important (I dedicate Chapter 8 to this issue), I consider that investigating actors' core reasons for involvement is also of particular interest. By only focusing on activists' strategic choices, one overlooks a crucial aspect of recruitment into social movements: individuals' own interpretation of what spurred them into action (Boltanski and Thévenot, 1991, 1999). Undertaking in-depth interviews with a diversity of campaigners in France and England was thus particularly appropriate to understanding how activists view their participation and how they understand the context in which they evolve (Blee and Taylor, 2002). This is especially important when considering altruistic causes such as campaigning against family deportations, which offer no obvious personal reward for campaigners (McCarthy and Zald, 1977; Olson, 1965). This furthermore enables us to better understand the influence of the 'child variable' and of the national political context in spurring actors into involvement.

Given participants' insistence on principles rather than interest, Olson's theory (1965) of collective action does not seem appropriate when considering campaigners's reasons for involvement. Theories of altruism (Giugni and Passy, 2001) thus seems more adapted to my study. One aim of

this chapter, however, is to investigate towards whom these altruistic concerns are directed: the 'vulnerable child' or the 'non-status migrant', and how these concerns vary depending on the national context.

I have identified a set of broad reasons mentioned by participants as having spurred campaigners into action. These related in particular to the sudden outrage felt by campaigners and the ensuing feeling of responsibility, the urge to fight injustice, child-centred reasons, education-related reasons and, finally, direct responses to the wider political context. I will now consider these in turn.

6.1 Moral shocks and ensuing feelings of personal responsibility

A great majority of participants recounted how they were suddenly confronted with the case of a family or young people suddenly threatened with deportation. In some instances they had already heard of similar cases in the media which did not, however, spur them into action. Only through the direct confrontation with a family or young person threatened with deportation did interviewees experience what Jasper defines as a 'moral shock' (Jasper, 1997, 1998), enhanced when individuals' 'sense of self' and ensuing feeling of personal responsibility were activated.

Moral shocks

According to Goodwin et al. (2001a: 16), moral shocks 'occur when an unexpected event or piece of information raises such a sense of outrage in a person that she becomes inclined toward political action'. My data indicates that such a shock was experienced by all participants upon discovery of the impending or potential threat:

*Ca m'a fait un choc de me retrouver avec deux élèves pour qui tout d'un coup, je découvrais qu'ils étaient 'sans papiers'. Je les avais eu comme ça, comme d'autres exactement, et tout d'un coup, j'apprenais qu'ils vivaient ça quoi, et là ça a été vraiment un choc.*¹¹⁶ (Interview 6 France)

This reaction was to be found in France and England equally:

I think what was personally the most shocking thing for me was just the fact that they were so willing to be locking up an 8-year old boy and just putting him through complete hell really. I think that's why lots of people wanted to help and support. They were so shocked that that was happening. (Interview 25 England)

Interviewees generally referred to the sense of urgency felt upon discovery that families were under immediate threat of deportation or detention. Such a sense of emergency was especially acute when the threat of removal or detention was impending following the arrest of family, for instance: *'It all became really fired up when the M. family was deported. They were forcibly removed from their flat and just taken to be held at the airport over night and*

¹¹⁶ It was a real shock to suddenly find out I had two pupils who were 'sans papiers'. There were my students, exactly like any other student, and suddenly I discovered that they were living through that, and that was a real shock! (Interview 6 France)

then they were flown away the next day' (Interview 2 England). However, campaigners' perceptions of threat – the simple awareness of the possibility that a family or young person might be removed – were in many instances almost as powerful as concrete threats. Whether hypothetical or impending, the sudden awareness of the risk incurred by children and families acted as a 'suddenly imposed grievance' (Walsh, 1981), which raised such a sense of outrage that supporters became inclined toward collective action.

Jasper (1998) stresses the emotional dimension of such shock, which my data clearly confirms. All participants, notwithstanding their experience of activism, acknowledged such an emotional component. In particular, all participants in France and England emphasised pupils' highly emotional reactions when told about the situation of a fellow pupil, whatever their age. One teacher recalled how a sixth-form student (lycéenne) had to announce her situation to her friends:

*J'ai le souvenir d'un moment très fort dans ma classe, la jeune fille là que j'accompagnais, je lui ai dit 'maintenant, je pense que c'est le moment [que tu leur dises].' Et là, ça a pleuré, ça a pleuré, la fille a pleuré, les jeunes ont pleuré. Ca a été un moment assez bouleversant.*¹¹⁷ (Interview 12 France)

Similarly, a mother described the time when ten year old pupils were told about their friend's risk of removal: *'What happened with Year 5 was that there was this big outpouring of rage and grief and they just wanted to do something'* (Interview 7 England). In all cases, the discovery of a child or

¹¹⁷ I remember a very emotional time in my class. I told the young girl I was helping [who was undocumented]: 'I think now is the time for you to tell them.' And then, people really cried... Everybody cried, the girl cried, all the young people cried. It was a rather shattering time! (Interview 12 France)

young person's situation was sufficient enough to arouse the urge to act among individuals close to the child or young person. Interestingly, all interviewees, both new recruits and long-time activists, stated having experienced such 'moral shock' when learning upon the situation of a family or young person.

Feelings of personal responsibility and 'sense of self'

Most participants referred to the overwhelming sense of personal responsibility felt when first hearing about the situation of a family or a young person. In both France and England, however, some participants emphasised the ethical dilemma they were confronted with upon discovering the specific situations of families. While they instantaneously felt a sense of responsibility, supporters also contemplated the idea of '*looking to the other side and doing as if nothing had happened*' (Interview 27 France). The English priest interviewed summarised the idea in these terms: '*it would have been easy to wash my hands and say "I can't you know". But there was a real sense of "sorry, you can't wash your hands with this" and I don't regret not having done so*' (Interview 21 England).

This call of duty transformed a first moment of shock into a drive to act as campaigners '*couldn't stand by and watch people suffer like they suffered*' (Interview 16 England). Participants, whatever their age, experience of activism or profession, all refused to be and see themselves as 'bystanders': '*Là je me suis dit "je peux pas, je peux pas fermer les yeux dessus, je dois*

réagir”¹¹⁸ (Interview 21 France). An English teacher summarised such feeling of responsibility in those terms: *‘He was in my class and I just thought that there was no way on earth I was going to sit by and not do anything’* (Interview 25 England). When discussing the notion of ‘standing by’, they explicitly or implicitly referred to contemporaries of the Holocaust who did not act to counter such actions. On the contrary they wanted to believe that they would have been among the ‘Righteous among the Nations’ during the Holocaust, as a secondary school teacher recalled the first time she heard about the situation of her pupil:

I was just sort of fired up and I thought ‘I’m not gonna let this happen, I have to do something’. If I can put that in context a bit, my father came to this country as a refugee, as a child refugee in 1939 and it has always been a major issue in my life. And the fact that during the Holocaust, some people took the decision to do something and others took the decision not to. And the idea, it has always been a powerful idea of not being a bystander. (Interview 29 England)

My data also indicates that participants’ ‘sense of self’ (Calhoun, 1991) and the ensuing sense of personal responsibility played a central role in spurring them into action. Participants acknowledged mobilising according to one or a combination of identities most salient to them, such as familial relationship (parents, grandparents), occupation (teacher¹¹⁹, social worker), friendship, political philosophy (Socialist in particular) or spirituality

¹¹⁸ And there I thought ‘I can’t, I just can’t turn a blind eye to that, I have to react’ (Interview 21 France).

¹¹⁹ I dedicate a special section later in this chapter to education-related reasons, where I discuss in more depth the heightened sense of moral duty felt by teachers when confronted with a child or young person threatened with removal.

(Christian). As the following selection of quotes indicates, participants explicitly referred to the salience of their identity to explain their involvement:

- As a socialist:

The main thing is in term of background, I am a socialist ... and then in the frame of my work I had individuals who were in this situation so it was normal for me to take up the issue. (Interview 5 England)

- As a Christian:

Je suis chrétien. Alors c'est vrai, c'est mon côté formation personnelle, je suis chrétien, catholique, je crois que là l'enseignement du Christ est très clair là-dessus donc, c'est naturellement que je défends ces enfants.¹²⁰ (Interview 34 France)

- As a parent:

When they got sent to Yarl's Wood the first time, my daughter rang me, she was really upset, and told me that I had to do something. And I was really upset then because when you hear your children upset, it affects you. So I contacted the family and said that I'd like to help them as much as I could. (Interview 23 England)

- As a friend:

Just because her and I were really good friends, it's just about it (Interview 24 England)

For most, such 'sense of self' was most strongly activated when combined with physical proximity and face-to-face encounters with families: *'Et puis ça fait malgré tout une différence quand on connaît les enfants et qu'on les*

¹²⁰ I am a Christian. It's true, it comes from my personal education. I'm a Christian, a Catholic. I think that the teaching of Christ is very clear on that. So it's only naturally that I'm supporting these children (Interview 34 France).

*côtoie tous les jours, moi ça me prend au ventre, hein*¹²¹ (Interview 27 France). My data thus confirms McAdam and Paulsen's statement (1993) that activists mobilise to a great extent according to the salience of the identity that defines them.

6.2 A fight for widely shared values and principles

When describing why they mobilised in support of families threatened with deportation, participants all referred to a system of core beliefs and values driving their actions, which at times encompassed philosophical or political worldviews and at other times spiritual convictions. Though they defined these beliefs in different fashions, campaigners all invoked moral and philosophical worldviews and deeply felt beliefs in justice and human-rights as key determinants of their involvement, what Downton and Wehr define as 'attitudinal availability' (Downton and Wehr, 1998). In many instances, participants referred to their upbringing and socialisation to justify such empathetic feelings.

A mobilising principle mentioned by all participants related to their urge to redress a perceived instance of injustice (Gamson, 1992) (Boltanski and Thévenot, 1991; Della Porta and Diani, 2006): '*S.'s case was an injustice. You know there are bigger things in this world than S.'s case, but I'm afraid, if you don't handle a smaller one, then the bigger one gets bigger*' (Interview 16 England). Their personal ethos provided participants with moral and political

¹²¹ And after all, it makes a difference to know the children, to see them every day. It's really heart-wrenching (Interview 27 France).

blueprints to oppose Government-led practices, which they viewed as infringing human-rights and support people needing help.

In particular, campaigners expressed feelings of injustice relating to the fact that the Government intended to uproot 'non-status' families and young people, thereby disregarding the life they had built in the host country. In accordance with each country's dominant integration philosophies (Favell, 2001) and confirming results from Chapter 4, French and English participants expressed differing views on the notion of belonging. French supporters commonly referred to the fact that children and their families were integrated within French society as a whole and had built their life in France: *'Je pars du principe qu'une fois que la personne est en France, qu'elle a commencé à construire sa vie, elle doit pouvoir rester ici'*¹²² (Interview 21 France). In particular, as discussed in Chapter 4, it was important to many 'affective' campaigners that families had made an effort to integrate within society, as required by the French State: *'Ils ont fait déjà tout le chemin qu'il y avait à faire pour s'intégrer à la société française et je vois pas pourquoi on leur refuserait ça'*¹²³ (Interview 32 France). English supporters focused considerably more on children's belonging to the local religious or school community. It was a crucial driving force behind supporters' involvement who mobilised *'as any family would react. When it's somebody in relationship to you, then you mobilise. That was the community dimension, it wasn't just somebody who lived in our area, it was a member of our family'* (Interview 21 England). Within that context, teachers and parents mobilised the school

¹²² I consider that once a person is in France and started to build up a life there, they must be able to stay here (Interview 21 France).

¹²³ They have gone all the way to settle within French society and I don't see why one would refuse them, why one would refuse them that (Interview 32 France).

community: *'It's the children who belong to us. It's our children. ... Our reaction was really "These children are ours. They belong to the class, to the community"'* (Interview 1 England). Such instances of potential uprooting from society (France) or from the community (England) represented the culmination of injustice for most participants.

Another difference between England and France related to the different ways participants conceptualised justice. In France, injustice was seen as arising from the Government's disregard for the life that 'sans papiers' families had built in France. They furthermore criticised the government's arbitrary differentiation between families that should all be entitled to an identical treatment. The 2006 exceptional family regularisation awarded to only a quarter of all applicants represented for most French interviewees the culmination of State arbitrariness (see the last section of this chapter for further details).

By contrast, many English participants expressed outrage at what they felt was the unfair treatment children and families were subjected to, which, in their opinion, disregarded families' hard work and their law-obedience. The feeling of unfair treatment was heightened by participants' convictions that other asylum-seekers, economic migrants or 'terrorists'¹²⁴ were able to stay in the country, despite not abiding by the law. They saw the latter as profiting from and abusing the system, when families and children were being unfairly targeted, as a selection of quotes indicate:

¹²⁴ In England, the fact that some foreign individuals found guilty of terrorism offences were not ultimately removed after having invoked Article 3 or 8 of the Human Rights Act caused outrage within the public (Huysmans and Buonfino, 2008).

In fact it does seem to us that they chose to force the vulnerable ones back, the ones most in need. The economic ones who are coming in and just getting lost, they are turning a blind eye to them, doing nothing about it, but to seize the vulnerable who have settled here! (Interview 16 England)

Many times people would say 'how can some other people be staying in the country who have threatened the security of this country and the K. are being deported'. And there was a sense amongst quite a few people that they were an easy target and that they, in a sense, were being made an example. (Interview 21 England)

In England, several campaigners thus differentiated between different groups of migrants, arguing that some were 'softer' targets than other less deserving ones. Such comments strongly echoed articles in newspapers, both tabloids and broadsheets, referring to some 'non-status' individuals as 'soft targets' because they abided by the law¹²⁵. The degree of penetration of media discourse appeared very strongly in participants' analysis of deserving and undeserving migrants. Such a conception of families as 'easy targets' is however refuted by removal figures, which indicate on the contrary a stark decrease in child deportations, as discussed in Chapter 2. This shows the

¹²⁵ The Daily Mail thus interviewed a woman liable to removal, who was looking after her British mother. They quoted her: 'I believe it's because I'm a soft target. I'm a law-abiding citizen who, not wanting to upset my family, does everything by the book and will go quietly rather than embarrass them by having them throw me out.' (Daily Mail, 25/02/08). Alongside the article was a column entitled: 'And look who's allowed to stay', describing foreign criminals protected by the Human-Rights Act from being sent back to their country of origin. References to families and young people being 'soft targets' were also found in the Sunday Times (10/03/07) and in a leading article of the Independent in support of a young person threatened with removal, stating that he 'is a soft target for the authorities because of his hard work and status in the community' (The Independent 08/02/08).

extent to which perceptions often matter more than facts in creating feelings of injustice.

6.3 Protecting children

The question as to whether the presence of children had an impact on campaigners' mobilisation was a main driving force behind my research. In-depth interviews were particularly suited to gauge the relative importance of the child dimension on individual supporters' reasons for involvement, since claims made at national level (see Chapter 4) might have been simple tactical devices produced by highly strategic activists. The insight into individual campaigners' own opinions on the issue therefore enabled me to develop a subtler understanding. It presented some comparative interest since the majority of interviewees in both countries were involved in coordinating campaigning activities – so-called micromobilisation and mesomobilisation actors. As a result of their involvement, their position on children was therefore likely to be diffused to and adopted by rank-and-file actors. My data shows interesting country differences with regard to the importance of the 'child variable' on their involvement.

The Child as vulnerable and in need of protection: a powerful mobilising factor

Most participants in France and England acknowledged a particular personal sensitivity to children. However, 'affective' campaigners were more prone

than ‘political’ campaigners to acknowledge such sensitivity. These feelings ran very deeply within campaigners, who would often become emotional when discussing child-centred motivations: *‘Moi les enfants, c’est vraiment le truc qui me, bah ouais, c’est vraiment le truc qui me perturbe’*¹²⁶ (Interview 12 France). Participants evoked deeply-held beliefs about childhood as a period of protection, vulnerability, and innocence to justify their involvement. My data thus confirms the relevance of analyses of childhood construed by adults as a ‘sacralised’ period of life (Cunningham, 2005; Zelizer, 1985): *‘Pour moi, un enfant c’est sacré, j’en ai eu quatre, j’ai dix petits-enfants, un enfant c’est sacré’*¹²⁷ (Interview 34 France). The high sentimental value attached to children was apparent in interviewees’ answers, and they expressed clear opinions on what childhood is or should be about: *‘Un enfant, il n’a pas à se cacher quoi’*¹²⁸ (Interview 35 France). They commonly emphasised the ‘universality’ of childhood to justify their involvement: *‘Je crois que là, les enfants, c’est quelque chose qu’on ne peut pas saccager quoi. Les enfants sont les enfants. Avec les enfants, y a **pas** de frontières’*¹²⁹ (Interview 34 France). Children’s perceived vulnerability and need for protection were of particular concern:

Children are vulnerable, weak, we should try what we can to have any say in where their life has gone (Interview 2 England).

¹²⁶ As far I’m concerned, children are really what, it’s really what perturbs me (Interview 12 France).

¹²⁷ To me, a child is sacred; I have had four children, ten grand-children. A child is sacred. (Interview 34 France)

¹²⁸ A child should never have to hide (Interview 35 France).

¹²⁹ I think children are really something you can’t wreck. Children are children. With children, there are no borders. (Interview 34 France)

[The fact that's it's a child] is what gets me the most. ... Children are different to adults and they need to be protected (Interview 28 England).

Alongside participants' understanding of childhood as a time of vulnerability, children's perceived innocence was a central mobilising factor. Children were widely perceived as the collateral victims of circumstances brought about by adults: *'[The fact that it's a child] makes it much more important, because children are so innocent. I mean he hasn't done anything whatsoever'* (Interview 26 England). This was particularly outraging to campaigners who felt that children should be entitled to live their life sheltered from adults' concerns: *'C'était purement la cause des enfants quoi finalement, la cause des enfants de 'sans papiers' qui étaient un peu, qui se retrouvaient au milieu de l'histoire alors qu'ils n'avaient rien demandé à personne'*¹³⁰ (Interview 32 France). According to many participants, children should not have been implicated in adult matters which they were not responsible for. Overall, participants' comments exemplified how deeply entrenched Western conceptions of the child as an innocent and vulnerable human-being are in current society (Cohen, 2002a; Davis and Bourhill, 1997). This suggests that the child-centred claims, as analysed in Chapter 4, truly represent many campaigners' deep feelings about childhood.

¹³⁰ It was purely the cause of children, the cause of sans-papiers' children which drew me in, since they were, they were in the middle of the story when they had never asked anything to anybody (Interview 32 France).

A heightened concern for child welfare in England

In England, many participants mobilised to protect child welfare, which they felt was threatened by State practices. This was particularly true for those working as teachers or social workers. Many argued that they had mobilised for a child threatened with deportation as they would have mobilised for any child victim of abuse or neglect: *'If you had any child who had been treated badly, you know, it's the same reaction really, you have to get involved, you can't stand back and say "well it's something which has nothing to do with me"'* (Interview 1 England). Such concern for child welfare confirms results from the political claims-making analysis. Interviewees were outraged by the specific and deliberate victimisation of children and families in the process of immigration enforcement. Beyond criticisms of the Government's shortcomings in protecting children (Jennings, 1999; Walgrave and Verhulst, 2006), participants expressed outrage over the state's responsibility in designing policies deliberately increasing children's suffering:

I am a child protection officer so I couldn't believe that obviously there are so many cases in the school where you kind of get social services involved about how parents are treating children. And then you hear that the government can treat children in similar ways or worse ways. (Interview 27 England)

I have shown in Chapter 4 that English campaigners at the national level widely referred to the child policy framework to oppose government's practices against children liable to removal. In that chapter, I wondered whether the systematic reference to *Every Child Matters* (ECM), a Labour Government Green Paper published in 2003, constituted a strategic move to

hold the government responsible for its action. However, it appears from interviews with English campaigners that the ECM framework was largely internalised by actors working with children in England. The many references by interviewees to this framework highlighted a real belief in this policy document, which participants felt was being contravened by the Government's practices towards failed asylum-seeking children. Interviewees' outrage at the government was precisely heightened by their otherwise positive opinion of the ECM document. Interviewees expressed two central criticisms. First, campaigners were shocked by the lack of consideration for asylum-seeking children in the document: *'We are writing to people to say, "No, not every child matters, not everyone is included". I think they have one paragraph in there about asylum seeker children, out of thirty-something pages'* (Interview 3 England). Second, the fact that the Government was actively contravening the ECM framework by detaining and removing asylum-seeking children was a particular cause for outrage:

I'm an educator, I'm a teacher and children are what I care about, and it just seems so wrong to me that the government can bring out a document like Every Child Matters and you know the five outcomes are 'stay safe, be healthy, enjoy and achieve, economic well-being and positive contribution'. And all of those things are threatened by a child being taken out of the country and sent back to a dangerous situation. (Interview 28 England)

It appears that the perceived contradictions between the British Government's stance on children and the treatment of children liable to removal were a particular cause of outrage for campaigners. Together these

considerably affected campaigners' confidence in the state's commitment to safeguarding children.

Differentiation between children and adults vs. extension of concerns to adults

The widely enshrined understanding of the particular nature of childhood was especially apparent in campaigners' differentiated feelings towards children and adults. Some interviewees expressed a lesser degree of empathy towards irregular adult migrants and asylum-seekers: *'Tu vois, même si les travailleurs sans papiers, je trouve ça dégueulasse. Mais quand même ça me touche moins que l'enfant'*¹³¹ (Interview 35 France). Even though such positioning was represented in both countries, my data indicates that English campaigners more readily acknowledged a strict concern for the child, as expressed by a headteacher: *'If it was an adult, I wouldn't get involved'* (Interview 14 England). In many instances, such 'bounded' empathy was informed by the perception of asylum-seeking parents as responsible for the situation in which they had put their children. Many English interviewees were convinced that children should not be 'punished' by the State for their parents' behaviour:

First of all, no one is defending the mother, she messed the whole thing up, she messed up the application to come into this country, to remain into this country. But I'm not allowed to punish children because of the way that their parents are. I don't care what the

¹³¹ You see, even though I find that the situation of undocumented workers is awful, it still affects me less than children. (Interview 35 France).

parents do, parents do stupid things, adults do stupid things, but you don't punish children because adults do stupid things. You don't set a system up to punish children (Interview 13 England).

A teacher similarly explained how parents' strategies to stay in a country should not be held against children:

It's just not fair on them. Because for example in A.'s case, whether his parents knew or not whether they had a forged stamp, ... the kids should not be punished for it. Because one of the kids that I've got, the parents are overstaying a visa, and the thing is ... it's not my business what they're doing and I'm just thinking about the well-being of the kid. (Interview 15 England)

Negative comments also related to parents' decisions to get involved in political activities leading them to applying for asylum:

Well I think that's what gets me the most. I just think X is innocent. You know his mother, when she became involved in criticising the regime in her country, she made an adult decision that she was going to put her political views before her safety and the safety of her family. And that's a decision that she made. X didn't have any decision to make, he is a child. And I don't think that children should be held responsible for the political decisions of their parents. (Interview 28 England)

In some instances, participants mentioned fears related to the use of children by parents or other adults to secure benefits or leave to remain, depicting the child as ignorant and agentless: *'I mean to use a child, it goes right from child soldiers to using a child begging in England, I mean that's*

awful. Children, they don't actually understand' (Interview 14 England). As indicated by the previous quotes, a substantial number of English interviewees viewed children as entirely dependent on their parents' actions and decisions, while parents were portrayed as partly responsible for the difficulties encountered by families in the immigration process. Such comments emphasised common understanding of adults as responsible agents and children as passive and in need of protection, potentially from their parents (Cunningham, 2005). Participants' accounts of parental culpability fit into tendencies within British society to pathologise and stigmatise parents for situations deemed as potentially negative for the child (Dobrowolsky and Lister, 2005). Furthermore, such comments echoed the British Government's efforts to ascertain the 'risk' posed by asylum-seeking parents to their own children (Giner, 2007).

French participants, by contrast, rarely differentiated between children and adults. On the contrary, most participants extended feelings of empathy to adults liable to removal. Most perceived adults as being as much victims of state practices as children:

*Je suis sensible à ce qu'on fait subir à des enfants, ça, c'est vrai que ça me remue particulièrement mais je suis sensible aussi à la façon dont on traite des travailleurs isolés de la même manière, pour moi, je fais pas de différence.*¹³² (Interview 6 France)

¹³² I'm particularly sensitive to what children are subjected to. It's true that it affects me particularly. But I'm also sensitive to the way isolated workers are being treated. As far as I'm concerned, I'm not making any difference (Interview 6 France).

Les enfants déterminant pour moi? Non, non, non, pas du tout...

*Non parce qu'il faudrait faire la même chose pour les adultes, c'est un droit, c'est un droit point final.*¹³³ (Interview 17 France)

The main argument given to justify a primary involvement in support of families related to campaigners' limited free time, which required them to make choices:

*C'est vrai que t'as des milliers de personnes, avec ou sans enfants qui ont besoin de soutien ... Alors moi je reconnais, c'est vrai que j'épouse la cause complètement, mais ma disponibilité elle reste limitée et je donne ce que je peux donner*¹³⁴ (Interview 3 France)

Thus, choices were made based on regular interactions and physical proximity. School enabled them to see and meet with families on a regular basis, while opportunities to meet with single adults were highly limited: *'Pour moi, c'est vraiment pas un engagement pour les enfants. C'est simplement parce que ben j'en suis plus proche à travers la scolarisation de mon enfant quoi, j'ai la possibilité là d'avoir une action à ma portée'*¹³⁵ (Interview 8 France). This, once again, emphasises the crucial importance of compulsory school attendance in building links and the opportunities this provides for mobilisation.

¹³³ Did children had a determining influence on my involvement? No, no, no, not at all! No because we would have to do the same for adults, it's a right. It's a right, full stop! (Interview 17 France)

¹³⁴ It's true that you have thousands of people, with or without children who need support ... So I do acknowledge that I really feel for the cause [of sans papiers], but my free time is limited and I give what I can give (Interview 3 France).

¹³⁵ As far as I'm concerned, I'm not mobilising for children. It's just that I'm closer to the issue through my child being at school, I have the opportunity to be involved within close reach (Interview 8 France).

6.4 Education-related reasons

Different issues relating to education motivated actors to protest against child deportations. First, general considerations on children's rights to education, schools' protective dimension and equal access to schooling were uttered by participants notwithstanding their profession. Additionally, teachers, accounting for thirty-five of the sixty-five participants, expressed reasons closely related to their own professional identity and their understanding of the role to be played by schools and teachers.

I have argued in Chapter 4 that claims at national level presented schools as places of sanctuary for migrant children and young people liable to removal. Interviews confirmed that participants viewed the school as one of the only places of safety and stability available to migrant children in a context of constant threats to their well-being. Schools' intrinsic role as places protecting children's well-being was strongly articulated by English interviewees. Participants in England more readily referred to the idea that individual schools '*should be about protecting the well being of children*' (Interview 15 England), '*places of safety*' (Interview 19 England) or there to '*safeguard children*' (Interview 2 England). Schools were understood as protected spaces that enabled the furthering of teachers/pupils' affective connection: '*It's the children who belong to us. It's our children. Once they come through the door, once they are in class, you build a relationship*' (Interview 1 England).

Mobilising against a perceived attack on education

Participants' education-related reasons fitted particularly well within the injustice frame discussed previously. Supporters saw state practices as directly affecting children's universal right and equal access to education: *'Le droit à l'éducation, c'est un droit universel, qui est alors là, j'dirais, tellement grave, et de me dire, ben si on les renvoient, ben ils cessent quoi et de replonger dans le noir quoi, c'est pas possible'*¹³⁶ (Interview 12 France). As the previous quote suggests, teachers' concerns over children's compromised educational future was closely related to their perception of the educational system in the country of origin. In some cases, teachers heard back from children who had been removed, confirming fears of interrupted education: *'A. has been back in Angola for six months without access to education, a bright little girl who loved education, loved the books'* (Interview 1 England).

Teachers felt called into question by such practices, as they directly contradicted their professional duty to ensure that *'all kids get an equal access to education'* (Interview 15 England). The awareness that this central principle was being overlooked for immigration purposes outraged teachers and headteachers:

'Every child matters' is this phrase that the government keeps saying at us and in this school, we feel very much that every child does matter. We have a lot of social problems in this school, you know, we are in a really poor area and you just do what you can

¹³⁶ [The right to education] is a universal right that is so important. And when I think to myself 'if we send them back home, they cease to exist and they get back to darkness', I can't accept that! (Interview 12 France)

for each and every child. And it's just the feeling that if there is injustice really, that promising people, talented pupils are in danger of being deported, you can't just leave them like that, just because of a law which says you have to go away. (Interview 2 England)

In both countries, teachers thus viewed state's attempts to remove a child as an actual attack to their educational mission. This mission was, however, viewed in different manners in France and England: English teachers emphasised their role as pastoral carers, while French teachers focused on their responsibility to further a child's education.

In England, teachers and headteachers' perceived duty of care played an important role in furthering their involvement. Headteachers, in particular, articulated a 'child-centred' ethos *'of caring for each individual in the school'* (Interview 2 England). Another headteacher similarly argued: *'My duty is to my students. She is my student and I must do everything to protect her'* (Interview 14 England). English teachers and headteachers expressed particular concern for 'non-status' children's compromised social and emotional well-being as a result of state immigration policies. They emphasised their duty as teachers to respond to children's needs as major reasons for involvement: *'I have a role in some sense to protect him'* (Interview 25 England), also described as a *'duty of care'* by another teacher (Interview 26 England). English teachers thus showed great concern for the development of the 'whole child' (Best, 1998: 73) as opposed to children's sole educational progresses: *'Our new curriculum is all about the holistic education of a child. It's not just about teaching on a certain curriculum, it's*

helping and developing into human beings, and keeping them safe, and loving them really' (Interview 28 England). My results thus confirm previous findings on English teachers' wide and deep understanding of their wide role and obligations towards pupils (Best, 1998; Broadfoot et al., 1987; Planel, 1997).

In France, by contrast, considerably less emphasis was put on the notion of pastoral care and protection. Teachers were primarily concerned with ensuring children's access to education and ultimate fulfilment of learning outcomes. They were outraged by the contradictions between teachers and children's combined efforts to ensure children's educational progress, and authorities' pledge to remove them:

*Pour moi c'était insupportable de me dire que cette petite fille, qui était très bien dans ma classe, qui était une élève qu'avait une super envie d'apprendre, qu'était en train d'apprendre à lire et je me disais 'demain si ça se trouve on va la prendre et la mettre dans un charter, elle finira jamais l'apprentissage de la lecture!' Et je trouvais ça insupportable.*¹³⁷ (Interview 32 France)

At the core of teachers' understanding of their role lay the conviction that it was their responsibility to help children progress at school. Any disruption to this development was therefore resented, especially since such a setback was deliberately induced by the state: *'Voilà, à la base, moi j'étais en train de lui apprendre à lire et on me cassait la baraque quoi'*¹³⁸ (Interview 25

¹³⁷ As far as I was concerned, I could not bear to think that this little girl, who had settled so well in the class, who was a child who had such thirst to learn, who was learning to read. And I was thinking 'someone might take her tomorrow and put her in a plane, and she will never finish learning to read!' And I couldn't bear the thought of it! (Interview 32 France)

¹³⁸ I was teaching my pupil how to read and someone was screwing up my work! (Interview 25 France)

France). French teachers thus expressed concerns over the inability to pursue their professional responsibility to further children's academic progress. This confirms previous findings on teachers' focus on knowledge and reason above and beyond feelings and emotions (Audiger and Motta, 1998). However, some teachers acknowledged the fact that educational concerns could not be considered in a vacuum, emphasising the need to take into account children's lives outside of school: *'En tant qu'éducateur, je peux pas dire "bon bah moi je leur fais cours et puis je fais complètement abstraction de ce qu'ils vivent au quotidien" parce que c'est aussi, voilà, c'est aussi notre rôle quoi'*¹³⁹ (Interview 23 France). In both countries, supporting children threatened with deportation was thus a way for teachers to combat what they felt constituted an attack on education.

A form of moral and citizenship education

School staff acknowledged the important role they played in informing children at school about the situation of a child threatened with deportation. Whatever the level – nursery, primary or secondary – teachers were keen to inform children of a fellow pupil's situation. In both France and England, teachers emphasised the educational process involved in informing children about the situation of fellow pupils threatened with deportation. They acknowledged the difficulties involved in informing pupils, some as young as three, about such potentially disturbing matters, but insisted on the central importance of educating them on such issues. Teachers of young children all

¹³⁹ As an educator, I can't say 'I teach them during the day and completely leave aside what they experience in their daily life'. Because it's also our role (Interview 23 France).

confirmed that they carefully worded their announcement, choosing simple words to convey their message. They felt that they had a role to play in imparting attitudes, values and beliefs to their pupils, confirming findings from previous studies (Alderson, 1999; Evans, 2006). The potential threat of detention and deportation hanging over a child at school gave teachers ground to bring up the issue during citizenship or religious education classes in England, and civic education in France. Many felt that such a real-life issue was precisely what citizenship education should be about.

In both France and England, interviewees mentioned a wider reason for involvement, relating more particularly to their role toward the 'whole' group of pupils. While English teachers insisted on their duty to mobilise to 'protect' the entire community of children from harm, French teachers emphasised considerably more their duty to take a political stand to be consistent with their role as educators.

English teachers thus strongly referred to their duty to mobilise to protect children that would have been 'left behind' at school, that is, the children not threatened with removal. They highlighted the extraordinary sense of loss occurring within the school community resulting from the deportation (or detention) of children liable to removal: *'If it's a death, you know, you have a grieving time afterwards, usually there is some type of preparation. But in this case it was just like that, and she had gone'* (Interview 2 England). Overall, four English interviewees made parallels between death and forced removals, emphasising the impact that such events had on children in schools. Migrant children's status as victim was thereby extended to the entire community: *'We very much feel that T. is part*

of our community and it threatens all of us if he is going to be taken away' (Interview 28 England). Teachers thus felt that it was their duty to mobilise to limit the distress experienced by children 'left behind' as a result of deportation:

Because the children at our school, they were distraught, losing, you know, losing [their friend]. I'm now talking about year 8 children whose friend got deported back to India with his family, they lost a friend from day to day. So it wasn't only the family that was affected, it was actually the children who are still coping with the stress of what, you know, with the loss. (Interview 15 England)

Such statements, documenting 'pain and loss' feelings (Jennings, 1999), confirm the political claims-making analysis. This suggests that the claims identified in Chapter 4 based on newspapers' accounts were not purely strategic, but mirrored actors' fears of the detrimental impact of deportations on the community. This best exemplifies English teachers' understandings of the school as a community (Sharpe, 1997). Threats of deportations infused teachers with a renewed sense of community, and their involvement precisely aimed to counter or redress harm done to the family, and more widely to the school and the community.

By contrast, French teachers insisted considerably more on the importance of 'speaking the truth' about state practices, comparable to the act of Parrhesia advocated by Foucault (Christie and Sidhu, 2006; Foucault, 2001). Teachers considered that they had a role to play in calling into question what was taken for granted in order to ensure the formation of

pupils' political consciousness¹⁴⁰. French teachers thus tended to articulate a more politicised vision of their role than their English counterparts. They felt a particular responsibility to take a stand in favour of justice and human-rights that was consistent with their teaching:

On peut se poser la question 'Qu'est-ce qu'un enseignant qui fait un cours dans sa classe sur les droits de l'homme, hein et puis qui, le jour où y a un gamin qui se fait piquer, qu'on emmène en centre de rétention, ne dit rien?' Qu'est-ce que pensent les élèves? Qu'est ce qu'ils peuvent ressentir et penser? Que le maître est un baratineur ou que c'est un faux-cul ou qu'au contraire tout ce qu'il raconte c'est du baratin? ... C'est un métier ou plus que charcutier ou, je sais pas, pêcheur à la ligne, on est confronté à des situations qui incitent à militer, à prendre position, qui donnent cette responsabilité.¹⁴¹ (Interview 14 France)

French teachers knew that they were in a privileged position to play such a role, but were also aware of the risk they took in speaking the truth:

Et tant pis si je risque, tant pis si je risque mon boulot ... Je crois que ce boulot, si je le fais, je le fais jusqu'au bout. Et si je le fais, c'est comme citoyen aussi. Si c'est ça instrumentaliser les enfants, et ben oui j'instrumentalise les enfants. Mais n'empêche qu'au moins, ils sauront de quoi on parle dans le monde et ils sauront comment on vit en France parce que ça, c'est pas la télé qui leur

¹⁴⁰ Two English teachers also insisted on raising children's political consciousness.

¹⁴¹ One can wonder 'What can one say about a teacher who teaches about human-rights in his class, and who, the day a child gets arrested and is put in a detention centre, doesn't say anything? What do the pupils think? What might they feel and think? That the teacher is a liar or that he is a sneak or that on the contrary everything he says is a lie?' It's a job where, more than pork butcher or angler, we are faced with situations that encourage you to be more militant, to take side, that give you this responsibility. (Interview 14 France)

*dit. Nous, on a cet espace de liberté, encore, profitons-en.*¹⁴²

(Interview 28 France)

Such results confirm previous studies highlighting teachers' understanding of their responsibility to give impetus and shape to the future Republican citizen (Mendras and Cole, 1991).

6.5 Direct responses to the national political context

In both France and England, campaigners' participation in social mobilisation was largely shaped by the national political context. Indeed, grassroots mobilisations emerged as a result of participants' confrontation with the practical implementation of state migration and asylum policies, aiming to remove any person with no right to remain on the territory. While these wider influences were acknowledged by all participants, they were not necessarily perceived by campaigners as directly affecting their mobilisation. French and English supporters considerably differed in that regard.

Mobilisation as a response to a hostile political climate in France

French campaigners referred considerably more to the role of macro-political factors in spurring them into action. In particular 'political' campaigners described in Chapter 5, that is, those who organised without being directly

¹⁴² And I don't care if I run the risk to, I don't care if I'm putting my job on the line ... I think that if I do this job, I do it right through the end. And if I do it, I also do it as a citizen. And if it's what they [the authorities] mean when they say that I'm manipulating children, then yes, I'm manipulating children. But at least they will know what people talk about, and they will know how people live in France, because that is not shown on TV. We still have this space of freedom, so let's enjoy it. (Interview 28 France)

confronted with a case, viewed their involvement as a way to confront what they felt was a threatening political environment. The hostile new agenda on migration – such as DNA test requirements for family reunification purposes in 2006 – were resented by many campaigners as a curtailment of liberties. Furthermore, widely publicised cases, such as police officers arresting ‘sans papiers’ children in schools, contributed to infuse actors with a particular sense of outrage:

*Et puis le ministre de l'intérieur de l'époque envoie les flics chercher les mômes en maternelle ou en primaire, alors là, ils nous a vachement aidés. Bravo Sarkozy, parce que comme dégueulasserie, là y a des gens qu'ont dit 'là c'est des signaux d'alarme forts'.*¹⁴³ (Interview 14 France)

RESF's emergence as a social movement organisation from 2005/2006 in the media meant that individuals had the opportunity to 'join' its activities locally upon discovery of such widely publicised events.

Some key dates played a particular role in furthering campaigners' involvement. First, the enactment of the circulars in October 2005 and June 2006 by Nicolas Sarkozy constituted central turning points for RESF as a movement. The first circular, which enacted a halt to removals of families with schooled children until the end of the school year, was perceived by campaigners as responding to RESF's pressure. It thus reinforced RESF's sense of political efficacy as a social movement organisation and demonstrated the government's sensitivity to the issue of schooled children's

¹⁴³ And then the Interior Minister at the time sends the cops to pick up children at nursery or primary school. I can't tell you how much it helped us! Congrats Sarkozy, because there are not many things that are more disgusting than this. Some people really said 'these really are strong warning signals!' (Interview 14 France)

removal. Furthermore, it provided much needed momentum, as acknowledged by one of the founders of RESF: *‘La circulaire du 31 octobre a été une grosse surprise et une grosse victoire. Ca a été la condition de notre survie, on n’aurait pas pu continuer sur la même lancée: on était encore trop peu nombreux à l’époque’*¹⁴⁴ (Interview 1 France). It enabled RESF to recruit new participants and organise its activities in order to make sure that no deportation would take place after the deadline set by the Government: *‘Cette circulaire elle était très con, parce qu’elle nous donnait, elle nous donnait le champ pour dire “la chasse à l’enfant est ouverte le 1^{er} juillet”*¹⁴⁵ (Interview 7 France).

The circular of the 13 June 2006, launching an exceptional regularisation procedure for families with at least one child of mandatory school age and with strong ties to France, was once more perceived by RESF campaigners as directly responding to the pressure they exerted to prevent deportations. The announcement of the exceptional procedure considerably reinforced campaigners’ sense of efficacy. It also infused undocumented families and campaigners with considerable hope that prefectures would resort to en-masse regularisations. The circular thus gave undocumented families the confidence to publicise their case: *‘A partir de la circulaire, toutes les familles sont sorties de l’ombre’*¹⁴⁶ (Interview 17 France). As a result, existing committees were confronted with a stark increase in cases. The comparatively disappointing outcome – less than a quarter of

¹⁴⁴ The circular of October 31st was a very big surprise and a big victory. It really was the condition of our survival. We wouldn’t have been able to keep going. We were too few at the time (Interview 1 France).

¹⁴⁵ This circular was really stupid because it was giving us the opportunity to say ‘the hunting season [to arrest children] will open on July 1st’ (Interview 7 France).

¹⁴⁶ After the circular, all the [undocumented] families came out into the open (Interview 17 France).

families were ultimately given leave to remain – ignited among campaigners an increased sense of injustice, which ultimately led them to sustain involvement to obtain reparation for families: *‘La circulaire Sarkozy, ça a été une duperie parce que toutes les familles rentraient dans le cadre de la circulaire et aucune n’a été régularisée, aucune’*¹⁴⁷ (Interview 34 France).

Finally, Nicolas Sarkozy’s election as President of the Republic, constituted another defining moment for RESF. New recruits decided to join or create local RESF committees in direct response to President Sarkozy’s election in 2007, which they saw as the culmination of ‘state xenophobia’ (Interview 21 France). In particular, the setting up of the Minister of Immigration, Integration, National Identity and Solidarity development crystallised actors’ sense of outrage. When asked about the reasons for setting up a local committee in 2007, a 46 year old school parent thus asserted: *‘Des raisons politiques! Politique, un dégoût absolu de ce qui se passe, mais absolu!’*¹⁴⁸ (Interview 3 France), which she directly attributed to Nicolas Sarkozy’s election.

Individual campaigners’ prognostics: influence of the national context

Given the importance of the wider context in spurring French actors into action, and English campaigners’ comparatively greater emphasis on children, it comes as no surprise that their individual prognostic to solve the

¹⁴⁷ The Sarkozy circular has really been a trickery because all the families met the circular’s criteria, and none was regularised, none! (Interview 34 France)

¹⁴⁸ Political reasons, political! A real disgust for what is happening. An absolute disgust! (Interview 3 France)

‘problem’ reflected such positioning. At the end of each interview, participants were indeed asked what they would do on immigration matters if they were Prime Minister, Home Secretary or Minister for Immigration¹⁴⁹. Their replies provided interesting insight into the influence of the wider political context on campaigners’ judgement.

Here, once again, the existence of a national network in France considerably influenced individual campaigners’ opinions on ‘what should be done’. RESF as a national network was able to develop a prognostic frame – a large-scale regularisation scheme for all families and schooled young adults – that was largely approved of by all interviewees. Among the research participants, many openly favoured a regularisation scheme extended to all undocumented migrants, but were satisfied at minima with the idea of a scheme for families and schooled young adults. In addition, many French campaigners considered that any regularisation scheme had to be combined with a stronger focus on aid for developing countries. They viewed this as the only way to reduce the gap between developing and developed countries.

By contrast, there was no such shared understanding of ‘what should be done’ among English campaigners. Locally, groups developed ad-hoc claims on what the government should do regarding asylum-seeking children. Only some of the ‘political’ campaigners suggested large-scale regularisation schemes and a reduction of immigration controls. By contrast ‘affective’ campaigners advocated mostly for child-specific measures. In particular, they

¹⁴⁹ Most participants expressed reluctance or fears at being in such a position. Other expressed disregard for decision-makers they saw as corrupt and inhuman. However, all interviewees ultimately expressed their opinion on what they thought would be the way forward in the field of immigration and asylum policies.

felt that children should be entitled to stay after a specific amount of time spent in England. Most campaigners called for an end to child detention, without, however, calling for an end to the indefinite detention of migrants and asylum-seekers:

I would stop children being imprisoned and I think if they were about to be deported, I would, you'd have to do something more humanitarian like placing them in house-arrest so that they can stay in their homes or something like that, until they are deported.

(Interview 28 England)

Many participants furthermore advocated for granting leave to remain or subsidiary protection to rejected asylum-seekers from war-torn, depleted or authoritarian countries, such as DRC, Afghanistan, Iraq, Zimbabwe, or Iran. Another consensus that emerged among interviewees was that asylum-seekers waiting for an outcome or unable to leave because of the circumstances in their country of origin should be entitled to work. Alongside protection for asylum-seekers coming from war torn countries, this was the only significant agreement relating to adults affected by immigration controls. Most of the 'affective' campaigners advocated for stronger checks on and a better way to 'filter out' newly arrived asylum-seekers: *'The ones that are coming and who are true asylum seekers, surely, they can be sorted out from the ones that are not'* (Interview 16 England). Interviewees thus partly reproduced the discourse developed by the British government relating to the need to differentiate between 'deserving' refugees and 'bogus' asylum-seekers.

Conclusions

To conclude this chapter, we can argue that supporters' reasons for involvement are diverse and complex. Overall in both France and England, the sense of injustice and responsibility felt by supporters was key to spurring them into action and arose as a result of 'moral shocks'. My analysis furthermore suggests that individuals' 'sense of self' played an important role in their involvement. In both countries, 'Western' conceptions of the child as vulnerable and in need of protection constituted an important mobilising factor. Similarly education-related reasons, and in particular teachers' understandings of their role as teachers, were widely acknowledged by participants. However, the degree of concern felt for the figure of the child differed widely between French and English supporters. Overall, in France, supporters more readily expressed concerns for the whole group of undocumented migrants, while most English supporters tended to differentiate between children and adults and between families and other groups of migrants. Additionally, in France, the wider political circumstances, relating in particular to immigration matters, strongly heightened many participants' motivations for getting involvement. Participants' individual prognostics confirmed differences between France and England: while French campaigners overwhelmingly advocated for a large-scale regularisation of undocumented migrants, there was no such common prognostic among English participants.

The importance of the wider political context thus strongly appears through the analysis of participants' reasons for involvement. We will see in the next chapter that it also strongly shaped individual motivations to sustain involvement.

Chapter Seven: Commitment-sustaining factors and disengagement

As Klandermans (1997:8) has remarked, 'sustained participation raises a set of questions different than those related to the conversion of sympathizers into participants.' My data precisely confirms this statement. Indeed, even though some factors for sustained involvement overlap with those spurring actors into action, campaigners' actual involvement also brought about new reasons for sustained mobilisation, relating in particular to the personal gains sustained through activism (Downton and Wehr, 1998). My results do not only confirm previous research on commitment-sustaining factors, they also refine them in light of the particular field of activism that I investigated. In contrast to other fields of activism such as against Third World debt, poverty, nuclear power or within the Peace movement (Downton and Wehr, 1998; Nepstad, 2004; Passy, 2001b), participants involved in support of a family threatened with removal have a direct and human involvement with the 'object' of their activism. This considerably refines and extends actors' reasons for sustaining involvement and I will consider in turn these different reasons. I then consider reasons acting against sustained involvement, which have resulted at times in disengagement from campaigning. These include participants' conflicts with family and friends, risks of burn-out resulting from an over-commitment, and participants' own perceptions of their ability to initiate change resulting principally from the wider political context.

7.1 Sustaining involvement through constant outrage, friendship, and personal fulfilment

Participants' sustained involvement resulted primarily from their confrontation with the glaring contradiction between aggressive and criminalising state practices and families' personal circumstances.

A heightened sense of injustice

Supporters' involvement was sustained through the concrete feeling that injustice was being done on a daily basis. In particular, this sense of injustice was amplified by the discovery or acquisition of better knowledge on state practices towards families liable to removal in both France and England. It is striking that most campaigners in France and England did not have much precise knowledge of the immigration and asylum system before getting involved in support of a family. They thus formed their opinions on the injustice of state practices in the course of their involvement in support of a family, through encounters with state agents or families' accounts of their experience with the authorities.

Participants unanimously expressed shock and outrage at the way families were being treated. When, for instance, they accompanied families to prefectures in France for regularisation procedures or to sign in in England, participants were shocked by the lack of tolerance shown by civil servants:

*J'ai vraiment eu honte pour mon pays des propos tenus par ces personnes de la préfecture, je me disais 'ben dis donc ces fonctionnaires, on n'est pas loin de Vichy' et un sentiment de nausée très profond s'est emparé de moi.*¹⁵⁰ (Interview 31 France)

Campaigners, in particular 'affective' campaigners, were suddenly faced with a system that starkly contradicted their beliefs. In England in particular, the treatment of asylum-seekers had been a highly controversial issue for many years, with debates revolving around the slow process and its apparent incapacity to deal with increased flows of refugees. The Labour government had been adamant that the asylum system was designed to ensure that those in need of help would be given due consideration. Among English participants, many therefore 'naïvely' held the belief that the asylum system was considering applicants fairly:

I thought that the case would be treated on its merits and given proper consideration, but I think due consideration means 'we will look at the title and then we'll tell you to get lost' and I think that's what they do. (Interview 23 England)

This did not just apply to new recruits. Long-time activists were similarly shocked by state's decisions:

I guess I was just quite naïve in those days, even though I had been so politically involved and involved in human-rights issues forever. I just assumed that they [the family] would sail through the asylum process. (Interview 29 England)

¹⁵⁰ I really felt ashamed on behalf of my country for the behaviour shown by people at the prefecture. I thought to myself: 'how dare these civil servants behave in such a way, we are really not far from Vichy' [the collaborationist fascist government from 1940 to 1945 in France] and I suddenly had this deep nauseating feeling. (Interview 31 France)

Administrative procedures appeared to campaigners as profoundly arbitrary and unfair. Those who attended judicial proceedings expressed deep concern over what one English interviewee coined a '*complete travesty of justice*' (Interview 13 England). English campaigners described the asylum interview process as being representative of an unfair system that did not allow for any inconsistency or lack of clarity in asylum-seekers' account:

[At the asylum interview] *they asked him to recall point by point what happened during the three-week journey through the mountains... [The interview] was four years after they arrived! ... They asked questions whether he wanted to go back to see his mother and he was afraid that if he said yes, he would be sent back, so he said no. And the person said 'That's a bit surprising that he doesn't want to go back and see his mum'. There was a question about the fact that they did not keep in touch with the family... But when I asked K. about it, he said 'Miss, there was no phone until 2005 in my village, I could not get in touch with her. I cannot write a letter to my mum who doesn't read'. They were judged on our standards you know, I felt that it was unfair.*

(Interview 15 England)

Another aspect of the system greatly resented by interviewees related to the state-led criminalisation of families as part of the immigration enforcement process. Advocates in France and England expressed outrage over common state practices such as family arrests before school and child detention:

I think the thing infuriating me the most is the fact that they are treated as criminals and their crime is to ask for a safe haven, not anything more than that ... You know the mother she was with handcuffs and immigration officers and she was treated like she'd done some awful vicious crime, and it's just. She hasn't done anything! (Interview 25 England)

This was true in both countries:

*Quand ces enfants ils voient leur parents, c'est vachement traumatisant... ils arrivent au tribunal administratif menottés, comme des criminels! C'est quand même ultra violent!*¹⁵¹
(Interview 4 France)

Detention centres constituted the most shocking discovery and starkest memory for most supporters in both France and England. They acknowledged, however, that their feeling bore no common measure with what detainees experienced. They were most shocked by the prison-like character of these centres, which stripped liberties off 'non-status' migrants:

*Quelque chose qui m'a énormément touchée, et dont j'ai eu du mal à me remettre humainement, c'est ma première visite d'un centre de rétention avec le fait de discuter avec les parents des enfants, le bruit environnant, les appels au micro, la fouille. ... Oui, j'ai pris des anxiolytiques un petit moment après parce que j'ai été profondément atteinte humainement.*¹⁵² (Interview 31 France)

¹⁵¹ When these children see their parents, it's really traumatising! ... They arrive to the administrative court in handcuffs, like criminals! It's so violent! (Interview 4 France)

¹⁵² Something that really affected me, and that I had difficulty to recover from was my first visit to a detention centre: talking to children's parents, the surrounding noises, calls over the microphone, the

The practice of detention as an immigration enforcement procedure was of greatest concern to English campaigners, as a result of the indefinite duration of detention in England. One English participant explained how he got to accompany a female asylum-seeker to report and was suddenly confronted *'with the indignity of it all'* (Interview 16 England). English participants concurred to portray detention centres as sweeping dignity off people, humiliating them and disregarding them as human beings:

When the family was in the detention centre, the school took collections and little gifts for the children. And the bag with everything in it disappeared within the detention centre, so they never got to take them back with them. And I think that just shows what they think about people in detention, that they don't see them as human-beings, and I found that absolutely appalling. (Interview 23 England)

Furthermore, English supporters all recounted the detrimental impact of detention on the children and families they were supporting. One teacher explained how her nine-year old pupil was detained for fifty-two days with his families, which strongly impacted on the child's well-being: *'[When the family was in detention,] we were really concerned. We were hearing awful things particularly about M., and him having particularly violent nightmares and just really suffering'* (Interview 25 England). Similarly, a social worker recounted her visits to Yarl's Wood Immigration and Removal Centre, the largest family detention centre:

search ... So yes, I took anti-depressants for a while after that because I was profoundly affected humanly. (Interview 31 France)

There was this woman there, she was hitting her head against the wall, and she had a child. She had mental health problems. If you have mental health problems like those, your child is not going to be safe. You're not going to be able to care for your child. We [social workers] have cases like this, and what we do is give the mother support and find foster care arrangements for the child. Yet here all they are interested in is sending them back and with no value of the child's life. (Interview 30 England)

Participants in both France and England recounted the violence of arrest, detention and deportation procedures. They regarded such practices as highly disproportionate in comparison to the low level of threat presented by children and families: *'Mais j'ai quand même beaucoup de mal justement à comprendre le mal qu'on peut se donner pour ces pauvres gens, finalement. Parce qu'honnêtement quand même, c'est quand même vachement démesuré'*¹⁵³ (Interview 28 France).

Through their involvement, supporters were thus exposed to what they saw as the glaring contradictions between state rhetoric and the reality of migrants' life. Such direct contradiction raised a sense of outrage among activists, which provided a strong motivation to sustain their involvement:

Cette colère doit expliquer la plus grande partie de mon implication concrète, du fait que j'ai dépassé mon statut de journaliste pour vraiment m'impliquer dans cette histoire. Une colère liée justement à cette contradiction profonde entre la

¹⁵³ I still have difficulty understanding why they go to such lengths for these poor people, really. Because honestly, it's really disproportionate! (Interview 28 France)

*situation de ces personnes et le fait que les politiques l'lisent à leur profit pour en faire un discours politique qui est à l'opposé de ces situations.*¹⁵⁴ (Interview 8 France)

Supporters' exposure to state practices had a considerable impact on their perception of government politics. Many participants confirmed having gone through a process of 'enlightenment' and simultaneous 'radicalisation' as a result of these encounters. Some participants acknowledged that such discovery had a transformative impact, which also opened up new path for activism: *'Ma sensibilisation, elle est d'abord passée par les enfants. ... Alors que oui aujourd'hui, ouais, je m'impliquerais pour des personnes qui n'ont pas forcément des enfants scolarisés'*¹⁵⁵ (Interview 32 France). Most 'affective' campaigners had given little thought to the asylum and immigration system before mobilising in support of a family or young person. They all concurred to describe their previous positioning on these issues as generally 'open-minded'. Their involvement enabled them, however, to develop a much better understanding of migration and asylum-related matters. They were also empowered into raising awareness, even though many still did not see themselves developing a comprehensive argumentation to convince bystanders. Long-time activists felt they had acquired the tools to transform a previously intellectual interest in migration issues into a practically informed discourse when attempting to mobilise bystanders¹⁵⁶.

¹⁵⁴ Anger explains most of my concrete involvement. I went beyond my status as a journalist to really get involved in this story. My anger comes from the strong contradiction between these people's situation and the fact that politicians instrumentalise it to their own benefit, to develop a political discourse that completely contradicts people's situations! (Interview 8 France)

¹⁵⁵ I was sensitised first and foremost through the children. ..., whereas now I would get involved for people who don't necessarily have children (Interview 32 France).

¹⁵⁶ The process of politicisation of individuals has been the subject of much research – see, for example, (Hamidi, 2006; Mayer, 2003; Sawicki and Siméant, 2009; Siméant, 2003).

Discovery of and friendship with ‘non-status’ migrants

Perceived contradictions between state discourses and migrants’ experiences appeared strongly through the concomitant discovery of state’s actions and migrant families’ conditions of life. The human dimension of campaigners’ activities gave an extra impetus to sustain involvement.

I described in Chapters 5 and 6 how most interviewees were suddenly drawn into campaigning against the deportation of a family or a young person, whether ‘affective’ or ‘political’ campaigners. They mobilised instinctively following a ‘moral shock’ or because of the wider political circumstances (in France), with relatively little background knowledge on individual families’ experiences or immigration policies. However, sustained interactions between families and/or young people brought campaigners closer to migrants’ past experiences, their situation in the host country and the trauma and fears resulting from such conditions. Thus, following an initial instinctive involvement, the discovery of daunting journeys and life circumstances acted as major grounds for sustaining involvement:

I read pretty soon S’s case for being here. Erm S. had been kept prisoner not strictly in a jail, but the army, the soldiers had taken her as their slaves virtually. And she had to cook and clean, and they abused her terribly. ... When you read that sort of things, I mean, that makes you a little more determined to help people, doesn’t it? (Interview 16 England)

Regular interactions and communication enabled individual campaigners and families to build and secure affective bonds. Thus, in parallel to campaigning, activists embarked on a more personal journey with the family or the young person under threat of deportation. All participants, whatever their experience of activism, described very unique relationships with the families and young people they were supporting. It became apparent from interviews that there was no clearly defined role or relationship between 'non-status' families and individual activists. Participants set their own boundaries when it came to the nature of their support, the degree of intimacy shared with families and the time allocated to their involvement. Nonetheless, in both France and England, interviewees portrayed a relationship that went largely beyond purely campaigning activities. In particular, campaigners insisted on the primary importance of establishing a relationship of trust with families and young people, without imposing on them. A large part of campaigners' work, besides aspects relating directly to families' administrative status, was about providing psychological and moral support: *'It's not only the political but it's also looking after the mum emotionally coz you know she is in quite a bad state a lot of the time'* (Interview 29 England). A French parent concurred: *'C'est un soutien psychologique permanent et t'as vraiment des cas qui sont très très très ardu'*¹⁵⁷ (Interview 3 France). In the case of young unaccompanied people, this support was close to that provided by guardians or foster parents: *'Je lui ai servi de nounou pendant deux mois!'*¹⁵⁸ (Interview 7 France).

¹⁵⁷ It's about providing constant psychological support, and you have some cases that are really, really, really tough (Interview 3 France).

¹⁵⁸ For two months I truly acted as a nanny! (Interview 7 France)

Participants furthermore highlighted the changes that such relationships made to their life. They described a two-way relationship based on different but equally important contributions on each side. In particular, participants' long-lasting interactions with families and young people considerably affected their views on people's lives as 'non-status' migrants. Supporters were touched by families' resilience in face of adversity, as expressed by a French primary school teacher: *'Les sans papiers, c'est des familles ... qui ont un vécu trois fois plus terrible que le tien et qui te font voir la réalité du monde aussi'*¹⁵⁹ (Interview 35 France). As a result, many campaigners were grateful to 'non-status' families for helping them to acquire a better understanding of migrants' life circumstances:

*La famille dont je m'occupe me remercie beaucoup et moi je trouve que je leur dois beaucoup parce que je pense qu'effectivement, j'avais pas les yeux ouverts sur un certain nombre de choses. J'ai l'impression que ça m'a vraiment permis de me décentrer.*¹⁶⁰ (Interview 32 France)

In many instances, supporters confirmed that such personal encounters with situations of hardship helped them put in perspective their own reactions to adversity and gave them a particular sense of humility:

They were grateful that I was doing them a favour. Those days that we spent in the car, that was what they were saying to me, and that was a very humbling experience. In fact, I want to say, the whole thing was humbling. (Interview 22 England)

¹⁵⁹ And the sans-papiers these are families who have a past that is three times harsher than yours and who make you see the reality of the world (Interview 35 France).

¹⁶⁰ The family I support thanks me a lot, but I find I owe them a lot because I think that I wasn't aware of many things. I feel it has really helped me to 'decentre' (Interview 32 France).

Such discovery furthered campaigners' ability to identify with migrant families' experiences: *I was looking at the system thinking 'if I had no English, if I didn't have a reasonable level of education, what chance would I have of finding my way around the system?'* (Interview 13 England). The presence of children enabled campaigners who were themselves parents to relate to families with children. Interviewees were concerned by the difficulties faced by families who had to care for their children, like any other parents, while having to deal with the additional burden of fears and insecurity resulting from their administrative status:

*Quand tu t'imagines toi dans leur cas, débarquant dans un pays où t'as pas de papiers et que t'as pas de famille. Bah quand je vois que moi j'ai des papiers, que j'ai un toit au dessus de ma tête, ça va. Par moment déjà c'est difficile au quotidien d'élever des enfants, là j' imagine qu'en plus pas de papiers, tu travailles dans l'illégalité, y a de quoi avoir une vie difficile.*¹⁶¹ (Interview 10 France)

Families' ability to cope with adversity aroused among participants a feeling of admiration. Participants came to perceive 'non-status' migrants as individuals sharing a common humanity, in particular sharing a common desire to ensure a better life for themselves and their family:

Ce sont des gens qui en veulent et je les admire, je vous assure que je les admire. Ils me rappellent ma propre famille alliée. Comme dit ma femme, mon beau-père est arrivé avec un chiffon

¹⁶¹ When you imagine yourself in their place, arriving in a country where you don't have papers and without any family. When you see that I have papers, I have a roof on top of my head, I'm doing alright. It's already difficult at times in my daily life to raise my children. Imagine on top of that not having papers, and working illegally, that's enough to have a tough life! (Interview 10 France)

*sur le sexe et il a travaillé, travaillé, travaillé.*¹⁶² (Interview 34 France)

They accordingly changed their views on migrants' lives:

*Pour moi les chinois c'était les fourmis ... et je découvre des gens comme moi, qui ont les mêmes espoirs, les mêmes envies, cette rage de réussite qu'ils ont. Donc la démarche qu'on a pu avoir individuellement, que j'ai eu moi de promotion sociale, ben ils ont la même.*¹⁶³ (Interview 12 France)

This confirms findings from Chapter 4 that emphasised French claims relating to feelings of shared humanity. However, in-depth interviews refined my findings to the extent that English interviewees also attached particular importance to such shared humanity.

Many participants described the close friendship ties that linked them to the families they supported. Thus, the feeling of personal responsibility mentioned in the previous chapter as a reason for involvement was considerably strengthened through sustained interactions with families, children and young people threatened with deportation, as '*you become personal friend with those families*' (Interview 2 England). The first reaction of outrage gave place to a more personal relationship: '*I feel like now particularly quite close to the family, and concerned about, well not just about the welfare of M. ... Now I know the mum and the sister and the brother and I think about what's gonna happen to them*' (Interview 25 England). In the

¹⁶² These are people who want it so badly, and I admire them, I assure you, I admire them. They remind me of my wife's family. As my wife says, my father-in-law arrived in France with a cloth on his sex and he just worked, worked, and worked (Interview 34 France).

¹⁶³ To me, Chinese people were just ants, really, and I only saw them as ants. And there I discover people like me, who have the same hopes, the same wishes. They have this rage to succeed. So the initiative of social advancement that we had individually, that I had myself, I can also see it in them (Interview 12 France).

case of particularly long campaigns, relationships between the family threatened with deportation and campaigners turned into close friendship and in some cases into family-like ties: *'I've become increasingly close to the whole family now and I really regard B. and his brother, you know, like my own children'* (Interview 29 England). In both France and England, participants only came to such a degree of intimacy as a result of regular and longstanding interactions with asylum-seeking and migrant families. Such affective commitment actually surprised some of the long-term activists who first decided to get involved in a more instrumental way. For 'affective' campaigners, it transformed a concern at first for the child to a wider concern for the family, including adults. These affective bonds reinforced campaigners' perceived moral imperatives to support migrant families, which increased, in return, their motivation to sustain involvement.

Social ties and collective identity with fellow campaigners

My data shows that a key factor towards sustained involvement was the development of a high degree of affective commitment to fellow campaigners (Klandermans, 1997) and the subsequent creation of a strong collective identity within campaigning groups (Polletta and Jasper, 2001: 285).

The main difference between France and England related, however, to the level at which collective identity was created. In England, campaigners primarily mentioned such a feeling in relation to other local campaigners. By contrast, in France, campaigners expressed a wider feeling of collective

identity towards RESF's campaigners all around France, suggesting that they were all fighting for the same cause.

When participants in France and England were asked what united them to their fellow campaigners, all unanimously mentioned shared values and beliefs in justice and the will to act to defend these beliefs, which provided them with a clear sense of collective identity. In England, some campaigners referred to Christian beliefs as another ferment of collective identity: *'Everyone that is on the committee is a Christian. ... Most of us are from the same church'* (Interview 17 England). The development of a deep connectedness between activists was thus greatly facilitated by the presence of unifying values and shared beliefs (Diani and Bison, 2004: 284).

Another ferment of collective identity related to the internal dynamics of solidarity and mutual support. In both France and England, participants referred to countless instances of mutual assistance. Activists' relationship to one another was summarised by one French campaigner as follows: *'C'est pas des amis, mais c'est pas non plus que des connaissances. C'est des gens sur qui on peut compter'*¹⁶⁴ (Interview 21 France). Campaigners expressed amazement at such unexpected solidarity and mutual support, which strongly contradicted common perceptions of society as individualistic: *'Just a real joy and amazement at what people can do, you know. People are just jumping up and doing stuff. It's fantastic. There's real mutual appreciation of what people are bringing to this'* (Interview 17 England). New recruits particularly benefited from such internal solidarity. In many instances, they

¹⁶⁴ They are not my friends, but they aren't just acquaintances either. It's people I can really rely on (Interview 21 France).

mentioned the moral and intellectual support provided by committed ‘political’ campaigners, who often were major sources of inspiration: *‘Elle arrive très bien à communiquer ce militantisme qui chez elle est très profond. Elle est très motivante’*¹⁶⁵ (Interview 10 France). Such mentoring into activism inspired new recruits into committing to the cause. Ongoing interactions helped new campaigners draw courage and hope from their encounters.

Regular meetings, protest actions and demonstrations were key facilitators in the development of a shared vision and ultimately a collective identity. They provided actors with the opportunity to confront ideas and reinforce their understanding of adversaries and of their key objectives. Some campaigners recounted collective events, mostly demonstrations, which considerably heightened their sense of collective identity. Similarly, school assemblies fulfilled such purposes of reinforcing a feeling of unity against a clearly identified adversary: *‘When I used to do assemblies...we were showing the policy papers and showed how disgusting they were and would say to the children: “But look how fantastic we are, our values are much better than theirs”’* (Interview 5 England). Thus, as argued by Jasper (1998), community gatherings, protest actions, and events helped campaigners develop a feeling of shared beliefs and values, which ultimately furthered a sense of solidarity and mutual support.

In England, campaigners strongly insisted on the positive impact of such mobilisations on the community. Participants reported a staggering sense of community resulting from campaigning activities in support of a

¹⁶⁵ She is really good at transmitting the activism that is running very deep in her. She really inspires me (Interview 10 France).

family. This was true at the school level: *'It brought people together I would say ... It made the school team even more united'* (Interview 2 England). It also applied to the wider local community: *'I think we've gained a feeling of being a community, you know. We're all in this together, that kind of team spirit has certainly been developed'* (Interview 28 England). Campaigners felt furthermore that this newly achieved 'feeling of being a community' could be relied upon in other emergency situations requiring large-scale mobilisation: *'There might be another time, another place where we need to. So I wouldn't want to overplay that card. Erm, it is there. I think the difference is now that there is an awareness that it's there, and it can be mobilised, so you don't want to overuse it'* (Interview 21 England).

Pleasure, gratification and satisfaction

One of the main sources of pleasure was the positive outcome of campaigning activities, that is, when families managed to secure their stay in the country. However, this applies mostly to French campaigners, and I will discuss in the next section English campaigners' more negative feelings. Activists portrayed a highly stressful journey into supporting families, but most of them considered that the amount of stress was counterbalanced by the few tangible victories: *'Parfois t'as des moments très gratifiants parce que quand tu les accompagnes et qu'ils ont leur papiers, là, c'est c'est la fête!'*¹⁶⁶ (Interview 10 France). Many activists recounted moments of shared emotion when families suddenly heard that their situation was finally settled.

¹⁶⁶ Sometimes, you have really gratifying moments, because when you come to help them [at the prefectures] and they get their papers, that's a cause to celebrate! (Interview 10 France).

*Ah bah oui, les événements marquants, c'est la joie quand ces personnes, ils ont enfin un papier que moi j'ai eu sans aucune difficulté parce que j'étais né là. Ca c'est des moments forts, des moments d'émotion. Voir des gens pleurer parce qu'ils viennent de décrocher le droit de vivre, ça c'est, oui, je dirais que c'est gratifiant, parce que t'es avec eux, tu partages ce moment d'émotion, ils t'en donnent un petit peu.*¹⁶⁷ (Interview 12 France)

The sense of making a difference was a key reason for campaigners' feeling of satisfaction, which was shared by most French and English campaigners. *'I don't think I ever really thought we could achieve anything like this. So it's given me, it's really inspired me to think you can make a difference'* (Interview 28 England). The reaction of 'political' activists was in that regard interesting. It could indeed be assumed that they were accustomed to such a feeling of making a difference. However, according to these campaigners, this particular form of involvement at the local level was considerably more fulfilling than more abstract causes: *'J'ai milité auparavant et pour la première fois de ma vie, j'ai l'impression de faire changer concrètement des choses qui changent totalement la vie des gens quoi'*¹⁶⁸ (Interview 19 France). An English teacher and long-time activist similarly argued:

I tried so many things politically, at least, these are some of the things that you succeed in and it's really, you know, it's very

¹⁶⁷ Yes, I really have memorable events! It's such a joy when people finally get identity papers, which I have had no difficulty securing because I was born here. These are strong emotional times. These are very, very intense moments. Seeing people cry because they just managed to secure the right to live, yes, that's gratifying, because you are with them, you share this emotional moment, they give you some bits of it. (Interview 12 France)

¹⁶⁸ I have long been an activist and for the first time in my life, I feel like I'm making a change in people's lives, things that really change their life (Interview 19 France).

positive. You know we didn't stop the war, but we stopped, we stopped the Kurdish family from, you know, [being sent back] (Interview 5 England).

Successes enabled actors to justify a posteriori spending time and efforts on such causes. The hardest situation to deal with for campaigners was the ultimate removal of a family, marking for some the clear failure of a campaign. However in most instances, activists still insisted on the fact that they felt that *'it wasn't in vain'* (Interview 22 England), since they had contributed to raising the profile of asylum-seeking children or because they had managed to collect money to ensure a better future for the family. Overall, despite setbacks and disappointments, most campaigners expressed a sense of achievement.

Finally, the personal recognition acquired as a result of participants' involvement constituted another cause for personal satisfaction. Campaigners, in particular 'affective' campaigners, referred to a feeling of personal recognition from their family or peers as one of the main gains resulting from their involvement. They mentioned relatives' pride over their involvement as a source of happiness: *'I think my children are proud of me actually. Coz when they saw me on the television yesterday, my daughter said "oh that was brilliant mum"'* (Interview 28 England). A French seventeen year old student evoked such family support with a similar amount of pride: *'Ma mère, elle est fière de moi, elle est contente, elle le dit à tout le monde ... ça me rend fière'*¹⁶⁹ (Interview 29 France). In some situations, campaigners'

¹⁶⁹ My mother is proud of me, she talks about it to everybody, she is really happy ... and I'm proud of it! (Interview 29 France).

family members and friends got involved and showed their support in a more practical way: *'I think a lot of my friends and family have done a lot like personally ... My parents, in particular, have really gone crazy on trying to get people to sign the petition'* (Interview 25 England).

Many factors thus helped campaigners sustain involvement. The human aspect of campaigners' involvement, in particular, played an important role. However, many factors also acted against sustained involvement. These were particularly strong in England, as a result of the English political system and circumstances.

7.2 Factors acting against sustained involvement

As mentioned above, the human aspect ensured campaigners' sustained involvement. However, it was also the source of distress and anguish resulting from the specificities of this particular form of involvement. In this section, I thus consider factors acting against involvement, and in some cases leading to disengagement. In my sample in France and England, disengagement was more common among English campaigners¹⁷⁰. As argued by scholars having recently investigated disengagement processes (Fillieule, 2005), such investigation sheds light on the different factors at stake in preventing sustained involvement, including macro-political factors. In that particular case, the strength of the Home Office in England as a

¹⁷⁰ Seven of the campaigners I met in England were not involved anymore at the time of interview. In the absence of a network such as the RESF network, I had no means to know at the time of contacting potential participants what their degree of political involvement was. I just knew that they had been involved in support of a family, without knowing, however, whether they were still involved in protest activism.

central institution constituted a structural factor that adversely affected campaigning groups and their perceived ability to initiate change. The absence of a network as a both moral and legal support provider constituted a further ground for English campaigners' disengagement.

Distress and anguish

We have seen that individual campaigners' feeling of personal responsibility was a main driver for both getting involved and sustaining involvement. However, such strong moral imperative and commitment to defending very concrete human situations was simultaneously a source of anguish for many campaigners. This directly relates to the human dimension of campaigners' responsibility. Many interviewees, in both France and England, expressed anguish at '*bearing the lives of entire families on their shoulder*' (Interview 8 France). The awareness of the likely implications of any mistake in administrative dealings on families considerably affected participants: '*Quand j'étais toute seule sur les cas, c'était des prises de tête, enfin des angoisses surtout. Je me disais "mince, est-ce que je me trompe?"*'¹⁷¹ (Interview 17 France). A priest involved in supporting a family who was ultimately removed recounted his fears relating to his awareness that any mistake was likely to have considerable human implications for the family:

I think people kept coming back to the question 'what else can we do?' That was a recurring question, and not just 'what else could we do' but 'what can we do to help them, and not jeopardize their

¹⁷¹ When I was alone on the cases, it was a real drag, I mean, I really had anguishes. I was thinking 'God, what if I'm making a mistake?' (Interview 17 France)

appeal?’ Because you’re dealing with people’s lives. And so, if you get it wrong, it’s not like getting it wrong on a computer programme and you lose your word document, you know. It really is very real, very serious. (Interview 21 England)

Such fears were heightened by participants’ impression that families had disproportionate hopes in the likely impact of their intervention: *‘Quelquefois c’est vertigineux parce qu’on se rend compte qu’on n’est rien du tout et qu’ils attendent tellement de nous’*¹⁷² (Interview 12 France). In France, in particular, campaigners had to deal with the fact that RESF was seen by migrant families as a formal organisation specialised in supporting undocumented migrant families. Thus, families tended to consider RESF campaigners as professionals, and put a considerable amount of hope in their actions, despite campaigners’ non-specialised background:

*Ce qui me gêne, c’est cette impression de responsabilité face à une famille. Même si au départ j’essaie de dire à chaque fois, que moi je suis parent d’élève comme eux, que je les accompagne simplement, que je n’ai pas les clés, que je suis pas professionnelle, que j’y comprends pas forcément grand-chose.*¹⁷³

(Interview 8 France)

Within that context of heightened feeling of personal responsibility, a source of anguish resulted from some campaigners’ involvement in confidential activities because of their illegal character. Such illegal practices,

¹⁷² At times it becomes vertiginous because you notice that you are nothing and that they are expecting so much from you (Interview 12 France).

¹⁷³ What annoys me is this impression of responsibility towards a family. Every time I try to tell them at the beginning that I’m just a parent as they are, that I’m just accompanying them in the process, that I don’t have the key to their problems, that I’m not a professional and that I only understand bits of it. (Interview 8 France)

such as hiding migrant families or organising their return, constituted a small subset of activities undertaken by campaigners (see the next chapter for a more detailed discussion of movement practices). Campaigners involved in confidential practices were bearing a heavy burden of responsibility which they could only share with a few other activists. Their fears related mainly to the disproportionate implications that such illegal activities could potentially have on families: *‘On dormait plus la nuit, un tel poids. Quelle responsabilité humaine! En se disant “et si on allait à la catastrophe? jamais on se pardonnera quelque part, jamais on n’acceptera d’avoir engagé des gens là dedans”*¹⁷⁴ (Interview 19 France). However, these fears, relating to the unusual and potentially dangerous nature of practices, were only mentioned by a small subset of campaigners – mostly experienced meso-level activists.

Overall, fears constituted an obstacle to involvement if they could not be alleviated through contacts and discussions with other campaigners. As such, supporters’ degree of fear was largely related to their isolation from or contact with other campaigners. In France, the RESF network provided such moral reassurance and support to campaigners scared of not living up to a family’s expectations. A campaigner involved early on with RESF confirmed the importance of the RESF network as a way to counter isolation and campaigners’ fears to make mistakes: *‘Les gens sont rassurés parce que effectivement ils peuvent nous téléphoner, ils peuvent nous envoyer des mails. Et du coup, ils ont l’impression qu’ils sont pas tous seuls, qu’ils ont des*

¹⁷⁴ We were not sleeping at night anymore, it was such a burden. What a human responsibility! And we were thinking ‘what if we are going straight to the wall? We’ll never forgive ourselves, we’ll never face having brought people into this’ (Interview 19 France).

*gens compétents derrière*¹⁷⁵ (Interview 19 France). The simple awareness that support could be provided by experienced campaigners acted as a motivating factor for campaigners involved with RESF in France. By contrast, individual community groups in England rarely took advantage of other campaigners' experience at an early stage (as mentioned in Chapter 5).

Besides fears relating to a heightened feeling of personal responsibility, participants recounted particularly distressing situations that strongly affected their psychological well-being. As mentioned previously, involvement on behalf of irregular migrant or asylum-seeking families went beyond purely political campaigning activities. Many participants in both France and England came to share migrant families' distressing situations and associated fears related to risks of detention and removal: *'Quand je dis que je partage leur peur, c'est que j'ai peur qu'il leur arrive quelque chose. Ça pour moi, ça serait un bouleversement'*¹⁷⁶ (Interview 12 France). Most activists interviewed in France had been campaigning in support of more than one family/young person, when the majority of campaigners in England were campaigning for one specific family. As a result, French campaigners' approach was less centred on the personal relationship with the family. However the repetition of such harsh cases led to a similar level of psychological pressure.

¹⁷⁵ People are reassured because, as it is, they can call us, they can send emails... And so they feel that they are not alone, that they have competent people to support them (Interview 19 France).

¹⁷⁶ When I say that I share their fears, it's because I'm scared that something will happen to them. That would really be a shattering event for me (Interview 12 France).

Conflicting relationships

Although many campaigners reported positive reactions among their friends and family members, they also experienced conflicts. In most instances, campaigners expressed grievances related to the lack of interest shown by friends and relatives, rather than ideological divergence. In return, campaigners were criticised for the changes occurring as a result of their involvement.

The confrontation with friends and relatives showing little or no interest led to both incomprehension and annoyance among campaigners. Participants were often hurt by the reluctance of their close friends and family members to get involved in such activities despite being openly opposed to state practices. Overall, many actors referred to the increasing gap they felt between them and their non-mobilised friends or family members: *‘J’ai toujours l’impression d’être en minorité. J’ai toujours l’impression que ma sensibilité ou mon regard, mon opinion sur toutes ces question sont extrêmement minoritaires’*¹⁷⁷ (Interview 8 France). Some interviewees recounted conflicts with relatives and friends who did not support their activism or had diverging opinions (Borland and Sutton, 2007). Such opposition to the cause they were fighting for was experienced as a personal attack by campaigners and often resulted in them distancing themselves from their friends or family, or at least in them not raising the issue again.

However, the main source of conflict resulted from criticism from family members relating to changing personal circumstances, in particular the lack

¹⁷⁷ I always feel like I have a minority opinion. I always feel that my sensitivity or my views, that my opinion on all these things is really in the minority. In my close circle, I feel I really have a minority opinion (Interview 8 France).

of time induced by campaigning. In some instances, interviewees' over-commitment to the cause caused disputes or tensions within the family or with friends: *'Ma famille trouve que j'en fais trop. C'est mon épouse qui trouve que là ça fait beaucoup d'absences'*¹⁷⁸ (Interview 12 France). In cases where interviewees felt the criticism was justified, they attempted to alter their behaviour. In other cases it led to divorce, increased distance or long-lasting conflicts. A French activist was ashamed that she remembered the date of the first regularisation she was fighting for but not that of her son's Baccalauréat. In many instances, disputes arose out of relatives' fear that campaigners were putting the 'cause' before their own life and that of their family: *'Elle me dit "mais tu sais ma fille, c'est pas ton fils, arrête de t'impliquer". Et je pense qu'elle me dit ça aussi pour mon bien parce qu'elle sait que quand je m'implique, je m'implique à fond'*¹⁷⁹ (Interview 21 France). According to participants, this showed that their friends and family members had difficulties understanding participants' strong feelings of responsibility and personal attachment to families and young people.

Campaigners tried to implement strategies to avoid unpleasant relationships. Aware of the risks incurred as a result of over-commitment, interviewees stressed the importance, for themselves and their family, of drawing a line between activism and personal life: *'c'est une question de degré d'implication. ... Il faut aussi savoir se limiter dans son engagement,*

¹⁷⁸ My family thinks I'm too involved. It's my wife, she thinks I'm too rarely at home (Interview 12 France).

¹⁷⁹ She [mother] tells me 'you know, it's not your son, stop being so involved'. And I think she tells me that for my own sake because she knows that when I get involved, I do it at full tilt (Interview 21 France).

*enfin ça peut vite être complètement dévorant*¹⁸⁰ (Interview 15 France).

Those for whom involvement had turned into an obsession all described instances whereby they were forced to step back from involvement. In order to preserve their commitment in the long term, campaigners thus had to set boundaries and give up some of their campaigning activities in order to regulate their involvement and thus avoid burn-out.

Burn-out resulting from mental and physical exhaustion

In the politically and psychologically difficult context described above, campaigners were aware of the risk they ran of experiencing burn-out, which ‘describes a state of mental and physical exhaustion brought on by over-work or trauma’ (Brown and Pickerill, 2009: 5). According to Downton and Wehr (1998), the threat of burn-out is one of the biggest challenges activists face in staying involved. My data confirms this assertion. The grounds for potential burn-out were varied, but overall they all related to an over-commitment to the cause, in terms of either time spent campaigning or campaigners’ emotional and psychological commitment. As explained by Benford (1993: 208), individual campaigners can have an overly developed sense of duty, resulting in them devoting all their time and energy to the movement. Campaigners in France and England mentioned the impact constant campaigning had on their physical and mental health:

It wears you out. I just think ‘Please, teach me how to say no!’ I

was ill for a long time this fall. I kept going and going, and then just

¹⁸⁰ It’s a question of how much you get involved ... You have to know your limits because it can often consume you (Interview 15 France).

collapsed. I've learned you can't do everything. I mean, I'll do everything I can, but I've got to have a life too! (Interview 3 England)

A common pattern in campaigning groups was the initially strong and rapid reaction to a situation seen as threatening. However, in the absence of rapid results, campaigns experienced ebbs and flows, which were particularly demoralising for families and campaigners alike:

I mean initially we were really strong and like had lots of ideas and I think perhaps a bit naively, I thought that there were a lot of things that we could do... I think we've all kind of sometimes thought 'I can't do it anymore' like now anyway. (Interview 25 England)

As expressed by a primary school teacher interviewed after three weeks of campaigning, campaigners became quickly aware of the difficulty of sustaining a high level of involvement in the long run:

We're putting in a massive amount of emotional and physical energy into this campaign and it can't, you can't carry on like that forever. So I think it'll be hard actually, it'll be really hard to try and think 'well what do we do next?' (Interview 28 England)

Campaigners welcomed particular events and new developments, such as support provided by politicians, large attendances at demonstrations or successful applications for reviews, as opportunities to relaunch a campaign in a stalemate.

In both countries time thus generally acted against sustained involvement. Interviewees mentioned the long duration of campaigning

activities as the main ground for decreasing support. Some campaigners suggested that the authorities had a particular political interest in delaying decisions: *'C'est cette attente qui est longue et qui est décourageante. D'ailleurs je pense qu'ils [les autorités] tablent beaucoup là-dessus'*¹⁸¹ (Interview 32 France). Together with the absence of new developments, this often resulted in a decreased motivation:

But I think what's happened, is that it's been dragging on for so long and nothing has really happened so that the school has never really meddled in as much as I would hope it would if it ever needed to. (Interview 29 England)

Perceived inability to exert change in England

An important difference between French and English campaigners related to participants' perceptions of their ability to initiate change, which considerably affected their motivation to sustain involvement. In France, activists were in the majority optimistic as to their potential impact on decision-makers. In England, however, opinions were mixed, not least because most campaigns had either failed or still had not had a positive outcome. This difference does not mean, however, that French actors were not confronted with discouraging events. Indeed, all French interviewees recounted having experienced disappointments.

In France, however, campaigners were aware of the multitude of successes previously achieved thanks to the mutualisation of information

¹⁸¹ It's this waiting time that is particularly long and demoralising. And I think that they [the authorities] really rely on that (Interview 32 France).

through RESF mailing list. It was common practice within RESF to send an email when a family had obtained leave to remain or had managed to escape deportation. Such an exchange of positive information was a major source of motivation for individual campaigning groups in a seemingly unmovable situation: *‘C’est gratifiant parce qu’on a beaucoup de résultats. On a eu des échecs mais on a eu beaucoup de résultats et ça, ça aide à tenir’*¹⁸² (Interview 19 France). Even though at the individual level campaigners might not have experienced success, the simple knowledge that other campaigns were successful was sufficient to reinforce campaigners’ belief that they could achieve their aims: *‘On n’a pas eu que des régularisations au niveau de RESF euh bien au contraire, mais par contre on a réussi à éviter énormément d’expulsions. ... Là-dessus, on a eu quand même 90/95% de succès’*¹⁸³ (Interview 15 France).

Alongside the existence of RESF as a support network, French campaigners’ ability to directly access prefectures enhanced their perception of success. They viewed such access to the authorities as a proof of their strength and legitimacy. All participants confirmed having had face-to-face encounters with state representatives in prefectures. In one department investigated, the prefecture appointed a civil servant specifically to supervise family regularisation procedures. All participants from this department confirmed that they had been in contact with him concerning families or young people threatened with deportations, as stated by a participant

¹⁸² It’s gratifying because we have many results. We have had failures, but we have also had many successes, and that really makes you keep fighting (Interview 19 France).

¹⁸³ We haven’t solely had regularisations at RESF, on the contrary. But on the other hand, we have managed to prevent lots of removals. Removals remain the most dramatic issue. Remaining in an irregular situation is annoying, but being able to prevent removals, that’s the most important thing. And on that, we have had 90 to 95% success (Interview 15 France).

reproducing a discussion she had had with one of RESF's 'mesomobilisation' actors in her department: *'Elle me dit "je viens d'appeler F. à la pref et il m'a dit que quand même, j'exagérais de dire que personne n'était régularisé parce que y avait telle et telle famille qui était régularisée"'*¹⁸⁴ (Interview 27 France). Such regular interactions and entry-points into the decision-making process considerably enhanced campaigners' perceptions of the likelihood of success.

By contrast, English campaigners expressed strong feelings of powerlessness and emptiness when confronted with instances of detention and deportation. We have seen in the previous chapter and the previous section that aggressive state practices may act as a trigger for both mobilisation and sustained involvement. However, it seems that beyond a specific stage of aggressiveness, a hostile political context actually becomes disempowering for campaigners. The power of the Home Office was indeed quasi-systematically mentioned by campaigners in England as a major obstacle to successful campaigning activities. As mentioned in Chapter 1 and Chapter 4, the implementation of deportations takes place at the national level in England, which means that decision-makers are much less accessible for migrants and advocates than in France. French participants all emphasised the positive aspects of being able to interact directly with state actors in prefectures. In France, though still challenging, the process thus consisted of attracting a high amount of support for one family at the local level to exert some pressure on the prefecture. By contrast, campaigners in

¹⁸⁴ She tells me 'I have just called F. at the prefecture and he told me that I was going too far when saying that no family had been regularised because this and that family had benefited from a regularisation'. (Interview 27 France)

England needed to activate both local and national media, as well as national politicians, for the issue to become a national matter worthy of the Home Office's consideration.

The strength of the Home Office was repeatedly mentioned by English participants as the greatest obstacle to their activities and the greatest source of discouragement. One campaigner described the Home Office as a '*very negative force*' (Interview 6 England) that negatively impacted on the campaign. Another campaigner similarly compared the Home Office to a '*brick wall that you're up against*' (Interview 16 England), thereby symbolising campaigners' constant failure to actually interact with the Home Office as equals. In most instances, despite numerous attempts, campaigning groups were not able to meet with a representative of the Home Office: '*We tried hard to make an appointment to physically see someone in the Home Office and we never quite got there*' (Interview 23 England). Such inability to actually debate with Home Office representatives stressed among campaigners the sense that they were unable to initiate change:

The system doesn't change, it just doesn't alter, it hasn't really changed anything. And of course that's what the system likes, it likes the idea that actually, you know, fact is: it's just resilient, and it carries on doing the same things. (Interview 13 England)

In that context, English campaigners recounted very similar journeys into activism, from the 'naïve' belief in their ability to help to the ultimate discovery that they were powerless against the authorities:

One things the campaign has really shown me is that however hard at it a community is, and however neat together all the

political parties are, and all the newspapers and the local media, we've got no power. Because if we cannot decide what we want to happen in our own community and even with thousands and thousands of people supporting us, then we've got no chance, have we? We are inept, weak and toothless. (Interview 23 England)

English campaigners' trauma was most obvious when discussing the prospect of further or renewed campaigning in support of other families threatened with deportation. Most supporters concurred to say that they would feel morally obliged to support a family in a similar situation. However their resignation starkly contrasted with the determination shown by French campaigners: *'I just hoped myself that we wouldn't have to do it again, you know because it's hard for you'* (Interview 2 England). A campaigner having supported a family that was ultimately deported thus explained: *'For us to do that again would be very difficult, to get the people motivated again. Because of what happened, they wouldn't want to do all that again knowing that the end would be the same'* (Interview 16 England). Similarly, supporters involved in campaigning at the time of the interview had difficulties imagining themselves campaigning beyond the case they were supporting, if the latter did not succeed:

If I know that what we've done has changed things, then maybe I would go into doing certain things in the future but at the moment, what I'm seeing is every door basically being closed in your face, and not really getting anywhere. I just find that more infuriating than positive. (Interview 26 England)

Despite strong feelings of moral obligation, English campaigners' awareness of the obstacles acted against renewed involvement: *I mean I'd like to say that I would be able to, but it's just... it's lots of efforts and you need lots of motivation* (Interview 27 England).

Powerlessness in face of the authorities was thus very commonly mentioned by campaigners in England. This finding is best understood in light of the results from the political claims-making analysis which showed a highly powerful British Executive more hostile to 'non-status' families than the French Executive. It can therefore be argued that the national political context had a direct impact on campaigners' motivations and ability to sustain involvement. The Home Office's centralised system constituted a key obstacle for campaigners, who associated its strength with their inability to initiate change. This means, in return, that English campaigners were less likely to sustain involvement in the long term, demoralised by the 'unfair' struggle they were involved in. The perceived strength of the Home Office, combined with the absence of support network similar to RESF in England, acted as central counter-mobilising factors. These two issues – the strength of the Home Office and the absence of a support network – were unrelated but, put together, had a multiplying effect on actors' feeling of isolation and powerlessness.

Conclusions

In this chapter, I argued that participants' motivations for sustaining involvement differed from those spurring them into action. These results furthermore shed new light on the academic literature on commitment-sustaining factors, by looking into the interaction of political and human factors. In particular, as participation continued, campaigners acknowledged an increasingly wider concern. Those who were involved initially to protect the 'Child' discovered an immigration and asylum system that they perceived as inherently unfair and came to identify with and feel for the entire family. However, my data also indicates that campaigners in both countries were confronted with factors acting against sustained involvement. This was particularly the case in England, where the lack of entry-points to the decision-making process, taking place centrally at the Home Office, acted as a demobilising factor. English campaigners were particularly pessimistic over their ability to initiate change given the political context in which they were situated.

We will see in the next chapter that this awareness also shaped English campaigners' framing activities, and what they felt could be argued given the political context relating to migration and asylum in England.

Chapter Eight: Repertoires of action and discourses: investigation of campaigners' strategic concerns

Besides pursuing an interest in individual actors' reasons for involvement, this thesis is concerned with understanding the strategies and tactics used by movement actors. Until now, this thesis left out actors' more conscious signifying work to achieve particular campaigning objectives. This chapter thus considers actors' strategies to reach campaigning objectives and the tactics developed to execute the devised strategies. To that end, I draw upon the social movement literature on frames (Benford and Snow, 2000; Snow and Benford, 1988). The concept of framing, as adapted to social movement research, originates from Ervin Goffman's (1974) work on the organisation of experience. Following Snow's original conception of framing, McAdam et al. (1996b: 6) define framing as referring to the 'conscious strategic efforts by groups of people to fashion shared understanding of the world and of themselves that legitimate and motivate collective action'. Crucial in this context is what Snow et al. (1986) coin the 'frame alignment' process, that is, the process of alignment of a social movement's discourse with that of the targeted constituency in order to encourage collective action.

The political claims-making analysis in Chapter 4 investigated claims articulated by campaigning groups. However, this methodology was limited to the extent that it did not provide information on discussions and debates internal to campaigning groups relating to their claims and movement

practices. In-depth interviews¹⁸⁵ thus enabled me to gain an insight into the ‘everyday strategic concerns of movement groups’ (McAdam, 1996: 339). It appears clearly from interviewees’ account that campaigning arguments and activities involved a high degree of strategic planning. This chapter thus investigate social movement actors’ strategic choices with regard to their movement practices and stated objectives. In the first section I consider movement practices in both countries, and the tactical choices that they implied. In the second section I investigate negotiations around ideational framing activities as described by campaigners in France and England. In both sections, I pay particular attention to the place granted to children, as social actors, and childhood, as a concept, in movement practices and discourses. Based on these results, I briefly summarise the main strategic approaches identified and the way they impact on tactical choices.

8.1 Repertoires of collective action in France and England

In this section I investigate the ‘repertoires of contention’ (Tilly, 1978) resorted to by campaigners in France and England. This can be defined as the ‘toolkit’ of specific protest tactics used by a set of collective actors in a particular campaign. This section is a response to McAdam’s call to investigate campaigners’ tactical choices to a similar extent as the framing of their claims. Building upon the previous literature on pro-migrant and sans papiers’ mobilisations (Siméant, 1998, 1999; Statham, 2001), I attempt to

¹⁸⁵ I also attended meetings in both countries, which helped me towards refining my findings.

explain the important differences in movement practices between these mobilisations and those examined in this thesis.

My data shows that campaigners spent a considerable amount of time and energy discussing movement practices, with the aim of increasing their chances to attract both favourable media coverage and public support. Specific types of activities were openly favoured, whilst others were excluded, according to how likely they were to resonate with the overall cultural and political context. I identify four characteristics, which, in my opinion, define the repertoires of collective action resorted to in France and England:

- Focus on public campaigning
- Child-centred practices achieving strategic dramaturgy
- Actions featuring children as central collective actors
- Rejection of violent practices and self-harm

Finally, in France, a further defining characteristic related to practices resorted to by the RESF network at the local, regional, and national level characterised by a strong institutional dimension. In my opinion, the last three characteristics (four in France) strongly differentiate such repertoires of collective action from those of 'non-status' migrants and pro-migrant organisations.

Public campaigning: Raising awareness while ensuring families' protection

The primary strategy followed by campaigning groups in France and England was to publicise the case of families liable to removal, perceived as the best way to protect families.

Supporters, when approached for support by asylum-seeking or undocumented families, systematically made families aware that their case had to be made public to oppose an upcoming deportation. In many instances, families were at first reluctant to publicise their case, fearing the likely implications of publicity:

I think they're like 'if we just stay quiet, we won't have bad publicity'. But obviously it isn't true. I think they worried [that getting] in the spotlight would put them in the front for being sent away. Like, you know, you get permission for good behaviour, but isn't the case at all. (Interview 2 England)

Participants recollected having had to talk families into accepting public campaigning as a tool to fight against deportation, insisting on the inefficacy of 'quiet' mobilisations.

In France, RESF activists fully interiorised the notion that RESF's modus operandi was based on public campaigning: *'Ecoute, dans le réseau, la règle est que plus t'es connu, plus t'es entouré, moins t'es en danger'*¹⁸⁶ (Interview 14 France). RESF activists, in particular mesomobilisation actors, insisted on the importance of working towards large-scale mobilisations as opposed to focusing on legal or administrative proceedings:

¹⁸⁶ Listen, in the network, the rule is that the more you are known and the more you are surrounded, the less you are in danger (Interview 14 France).

*Notre truc, c'est pas le juridique, alors forcément on finit par en savoir des choses parce qu'on est bien obligés. Moi je dis toujours aux gens qui sont engloutis dans les dossiers que c'est pas notre rôle. Notre rôle, **c'est de foutre la merde**. Un bon dossier, ça régularise pas. Une bonne mobilisation, ça régularise. Et notre rôle, c'est bien ça.*¹⁸⁷ (Interview 7 France)

The fact that this idea was successfully spread to most RESF campaigners was apparent during interviews with French campaigners, who all insisted on RESF's specific *modus operandi*. Protests – as opposed to lobbying or cause-lawyering¹⁸⁸ – furthermore constitutes a common characteristic of social movements in France (Fillieule, 1997).

The main activities advocated for by campaigners were petitions, public meetings and vigils, as well as more demonstrative protest actions, such as demonstrations or rallies. Large-scale public actions responded to a clear 'logic of numbers', perceived as the only way to give an indication of the amount of support families enjoyed. Large-scale events also played a key role in furthering a sense of collective identity and connectedness among campaigners, as mentioned in the previous chapter. This was particularly true for events directly targeted at the government or state actors implementing laws. For instance, numerous French campaigners mentioned protests in front of police stations, *préfectures* or detention centres as key events furthering their sense of collective identity as RESF campaigners.

¹⁸⁷ Our forte is not the juridical field, even though you obviously end up knowing things because you kind of have to. But I always tell people who are sinking under the weight of documents that it's not our role. Our role is to create havoc. A good file doesn't help you get a regularisation. A good mobilisation helps you get a regularisation. And THAT's our role! (Interview 7 France)

¹⁸⁸ In France, however, the Groupe d'Information et de Soutien aux Travailleurs Immigrés (GISTI) has been among the few organisations involved in cause-lawyering in support of migrants (Israël, 2003).

Child-centred practices achieving strategic dramaturgy

My data confirms the extent to which social movement practices are strategic performances (Eyerman, 2005; McAdam, 1996) which rely on emotions as a mobilising technique (Goodwin et al., 2001a). Whittier (2001: 237) argues that movement groups 'interactively construct feelings that are genuinely felt and they strategize about and collectively decide what emotions to display ... in order to promote particular responses in observers'. Campaigners explained, however, that not all movement practices were discussed and negotiated. Following very sudden events or in emergency situations, some movement practices arose spontaneously and unexpectedly without previous negotiation. I cannot argue, therefore, that campaigning activities all resulted from longstanding debates aimed at maximising strategic dramaturgy (McAdam, 1996).

My data indicates that campaigners in France and England resorted to similar means of achieving strategic dramaturgy by staging movement practices centred on the child, which relied on the collective mobilisation of heightened emotions (Aminzade and McAdam, 2001). In the particular context of child deportations, campaigners relied on schools as places widely respected for their central role within society, and rich in symbolic meaning and emotional overtones to stage activities (Yang, 2005: 83-4). Overall such practices made it particularly difficult for state authorities to discredit movement actors, and enabled campaigners to shame the French and UK Governments into moral conduct (Flam, 2005: 30).

Many campaigning activities featured childhood signifiers, such as places symbolic of childhood, actors key to children's lives, or children's hobbies. Furthermore, during protests, children's pictures and drawings featured prominently. These different signifiers provided key means for dramatising injustice. All these activities attempted to gain public support through 'moral shocks' (Jasper and Poulsen, 1995).

In France, for instance, the RESF logo redesigned a road sign calling for drivers to be aware of children (Figure 8.1) into representing policemen actually forcing children into leaving the country (Figure 8.2):

Figure 8.1: Road sign located near schools in France



Figure 8.2: RESF's logo

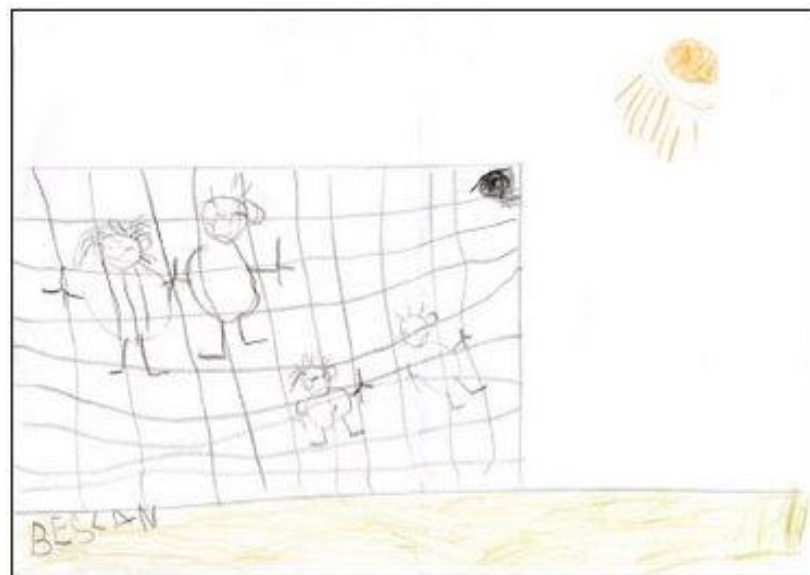


RESF thereby relied on common understandings about ensuring child safety to symbolise the deliberate victimisation of children by the Police.

In both countries campaigning groups opted for the mass sending of postcards to ministers. In France, postcards featuring the drawing of life in a detention centre by a detained child were sent at national level to the immigration minister (Figure 8.3). The card directly invited bystanders to confront their understanding of childhood as a time of happiness with children's experience of detention to raise a sense of outrage. In England, a

school fighting against the deportation of two children similarly sent Christmas cards to the Home Secretary: *'We decided that we would send the Home Secretary Christmas cards so they got a few hundred from us. And we said "Hope you have a nice Christmas, but please bear a thought for the K. family"'* (Interview 22 England). In all instances, these activities were publicised in the media, emphasising the innocent and harmless activities undertaken by campaigning actors, including children, in comparison to state practices.

Figure 8.3: Drawing on a RESF postcard sent to the immigration minister in France



Centre de Rétention Administrative de Lyon Saint-Exupéry (Janvier 2008)

Testimonies also constituted common movement practice in France and England. These activities directly aimed to recruit potential bystanders by producing 'moral shocks' discussed in Chapter 6. In most instances, these

were testimonies of the children directly affected by immigration controls. However, in other cases, children 'left behind', that is, children not affected by immigration controls, came to share their sorrow following the removal of their friend. In these particular contexts, it can be argued that it is the contrast between children's experiences and what 'childhood is supposed to be about' that most strongly affected adults. A secondary school teacher explained how she organised a meeting to raise awareness on the situation of children liable to removal:

We had a few parent governors who came in from the schools and they had no idea, and they were actually [shocked]. I mean the chair of governors for X, she had no idea. We did make the meeting completely gruesome. We had A.'s friends coming and talking about him and why they miss him. We had K. talking about his experience and we also had another girl from year 10 and she is from Sierra Leone and her experiences have been absolutely awful. You know when she was telling us the stories from Sierra Leone, we were all literally in tears in the room. The first thing that the chair said after this meeting was like 'where can I go and help?'. (Interview 15 England)

The depiction of children's experiences so starkly contradicting common understanding of childhood as a time of innocence and happiness produced 'moral shocks' among listeners, as exemplified by the chair of governors' reaction (Jasper and Poulsen, 1995).

Some of the best examples of movement practices achieving emotional resonance, however, featured young children as actors. English campaigners

mentioned considerably more such types of activities than French campaigners. While this might be due to the crucial role of the Western conception of childhood as a mobilising factor in England (see Chapter 6), it might also result from a greater willingness on the side of English campaigners to involve younger children in campaigning activities. For instance, a song was written in an English school in support of a child threatened with removal. One of the lead campaigners – a teacher at the child's school – became quickly aware of the opportunity provided by this song to stage children's emotional support for their friend and thus gain attention to the cause: *'When R. told me about that song, I just thought 'That is it! That is the answer. That is gonna do us a big favour!' I thought that the press would be very interested in a load of children singing a really sweet song, the sort of thing that they would like'* (Interview 28 England). This song sung by school children quickly attracted local and national media coverage and generated an enormous amount of sympathy. Campaigners were therefore successful in their strategic deployment of emotions (Benford, 1997). In another school, a teacher organised an event that also attracted media coverage:

They got the press to come in and to go to the top of the school.

The children from the school spelled his name in the playground,

and they got a picture in the local paper. It was lovely. That friend

of mine decided this would get in the paper and he was right!

(Interview 5 England)

In these particular cases, children, despite being involved, were first and foremost the means through which to symbolise innocence and

emotional attachment. Indeed, young children were not as aware as adult campaigners of the emotionally powerful appeal produced by such activities. It can be argued that these actions correspond to Rung 4 and 5 of the ladder of children's participation designed by Roger Hart (See Appendix 6), that is, children were assigned to or consulted about, and subsequently involved in an action first initiated by adults (Hart, 1992). However, as discussed in Chapter 5, the authorities in both countries have attempted to undermine the scale of children's participation by arguing that they were manipulated into participating (Rung 1 of Roger Hart's ladder). I show in the following subsection that children and young people (hereafter CYP) were, in many instances, directly involved in leading and initiating actions, as well as making decisions together with adults. These actions correspond to the upper rungs of Hart's ladder.

Child-led activities: Children and young people as collective actors

My analysis of movement practices clearly emphasises the central role young people played in these mobilisations, confirming Cunningham and Lavalette's (2002) statement that CYP are active subjects keen to engage in political issues that are close to their heart. As is the case for adults, however, differences arise depending on the location, socio-economic status and age of CYP. Considering these activities enables us to better understand the strength and power that young people have, both as agents and with regard to what they represent. I have identified two areas demonstrating CYP's strength as collective actors. CYP's participation in movement practices as

strong collective actors first satisfied a logic of numbers avidly pursued by campaigners. Second and most importantly, children-led activities enabled them to convincingly affirm their agency as political actors.

Such results are especially interesting as the role played by children as social movement actors was largely overlooked in the political claims-making analysis (Chapter 4). This might be explained by the difficulty for children in acting as interlocutors in the media due to the obligation to have parental consent for children under the age of sixteen, or because of journalists' potential biases or fears. This might also be due to coding biases as a protest action will not be coded as children-led if journalists do not specify in their reports who takes part in it.

The politics of numbers: the central role of children's networks

We have seen that uniting a critical mass of supporters was a key objective for campaigners. School pupils as collective actors were thus critical to transforming a potentially low-key mobilisation into a large-scale event. Adult campaigners were themselves aware of the potential for mobilisation provided by the school setting:

*And then we just went around the school and we just said 'Look, if you are about, if you are free at 6 o'clock tonight, then come down to the town hall at N.' And there were **hundreds of them** there, hundreds of kids who had come, some with parents. (Interview 22 England)*

Similarly in France, during judicial hearings, large-scale attendances by young people were highly visible: '*Quand les lycéens se mobilisent, ils sont*

[impressionnants]. *Au Tribunal Administratif, on en a eu 1000 une fois!*¹⁸⁹ (Interview 14 France). With regard to petitioning, secondary school students also proved particularly resourceful, mainly thanks to their widespread social networks: *‘Les lycéens ont réussi à faire signer 2000 pétitions en 2 mois!’*¹⁹⁰ (Interview 7 France). Young people’s ability to link up with a wide range of actors through school and online networks was key to the en-masse mobilisation of CYP as collective actors. Adult campaigners acknowledged that CYP achieved in little time what would take adults twice as long to achieve. Young people interviewed talked about the central role of new technologies – mobile phones and the internet – to successfully and quickly mobilise their networks and conduct campaigns (Gerodimos, 2008; Stasiulis, 2002). The innovative methods they resorted to – texting, emails or internet-based campaigns through Facebook, MySpace or Bebo – were generally highly successful, and inspired many adult campaigners to use similar methods.

In France in particular, mass demonstrations by secondary school pupils were considered real tactical ‘weapons’. Many participants referred to prefectures’ fear of being faced with hordes of assertive and unruly young people. According to interviewees, the authorities were particularly fearful of potential disruptions and instances of violence in a context marked by the 2005 riots in some French ‘banlieues’ (Mucchielli and Aït-Omar, 2007): *‘Quand c’est collège ou lycée, dès que y a des élèves, ça leur fait beaucoup*

¹⁸⁹ When high school pupils get involved, they are [impressive]. At the administrative court once, they were 1,000! (Interview 14 France)

¹⁹⁰ The high school students managed to get 2,000 petition signatures within two months! (Interview 7 France)

*plus peur parce que c'est ingérable une manif de lycée*¹⁹¹ (Interview 7 France). Such large-scale mobilisations by young people were very often pre-empted by prefectures. In a sensitive 'balancing act' prefectures thus opted for the regularisation of a young person to avoid being confronted with a large-scale demonstration of young people¹⁹², as explained by a young person in France: *'On prévoyait d'aller manifester devant la préfecture, mais finalement, ils ont accepté avant qu'on ait besoin d'y aller, brusquement, comme c'est bizarre!'*¹⁹³ (Interview 16 France)

One argument brought about by young people to explain their mobilisations on such a large-scale was their commitment to supporting friends in need. Children and young people were keen to emphasise their unconditional solidarity with their friends, while adults concurred to portray children, wherever they were based, as selfless and committed: *'La jeunesse, c'est l'âge où on ne compte pas, on ne va avoir ces calculs mercantiles de ce que ça va coûter, de "est-ce que ça va nous déposséder de quelque chose?"'*¹⁹⁴ (Interview 12 France). Parents and teachers were themselves surprised to see their own children or pupils adopting a behaviour that starkly contrasted their usually individualistic selves. In some instances, the authorities attempted to portray such involvement as self-interested

¹⁹¹ When it's with secondary school pupils, it's much more scary for the authorities because they feel they can't control pupils (Interview 7 France)

¹⁹² In some cases, prefects stuck to a 'hard line', that is, removed young people despite large-scale support by secondary school students. However, in most cases, prefects, or at times the Government, ultimately allowed these young people to come back on a student visa or were forced to accept their return given the scale of support.

¹⁹³ We were planning to go and protest in front of the prefecture, but in the end they accepted before we had to go, straight away. How bizarre! (Interview 16 France)

¹⁹⁴ Youth is the time where you don't count, you don't have mercantile calculations of what it's going to cost, or 'it is going to deprive us of something?' (Interview 12 France)

opportunities for young people to miss out on school, but these were strongly rebutted by the young people themselves.

Adult campaigners repeatedly expressed amazement at the creativity and astonishing resources that children and young people displayed. In England, campaigners emphasised more strongly than in France the central role played by young children at nursery and primary school. It was interesting to note the difference French campaigners were making between children and young people ('les jeunes' or 'ados'): it was self-understandable for them that young people would get involved, whilst children were seen as potentially too young to be involved in politics¹⁹⁵. Children's power of influence as political actors was understood by young people themselves, as summarised by a 16-year old who mobilised in support of a friend at age 13:

The campaign was almost as successful because there were so many kids involved. So if there were more kids involved, then more people would listen. I don't think they [the authorities] really listen to adults as much. But I think they would listen to loads of kids. (Interview 24 England)

Adult campaigners referred to their astonishment at CYP's ability to spontaneously stage highly successful activities, achieving at times more 'strategic dramaturgy' (McAdam, 1996) than long negotiated activities. For instance, a French campaigner explained how at a press conference a visually impaired seven year old girl, daughter of an undocumented family and unknown to campaigners, suddenly stood up to talk about her family's

¹⁹⁵ Campaigners acknowledged, however, that they encouraged their own children, even at a very young age, to take part in activities such as protest actions.

situation. This 'heartbreaking' story was then reported in the newspaper with the journalist asking for others to help. Campaigners subsequently received numerous phone calls. In England, a campaigner similarly explained how the fully unprepared interview of two primary school girls on TV also did more than any long debated discourse:

No adult could have been as eloquent as those two girls. They just kind of said 'what has he done? He's done nothing! He doesn't deserve to be removed from the country'. It was just straightforward to them, black and white justice. (Interview 17 England)

Such situations clearly emphasised young people's agency and strong political will.

Interviewees also recounted how pupils often decided to organise their own activities, which they felt were more likely to be effective than those advocated by adults. In that sense, pupils clearly had an agenda-setting role:

Students were coming to me saying 'what can we do about this?' and we were saying 'write to your MP, write.' And they took all of this and quite rightly said 'That's not what we'll do' and they set up the website and then started the communication (Interview 13 England)

This confirms findings from previous studies relating to the use of less traditional activities by children (Stasiulis, 2002). Pupils often took campaigns into their own hands, coming up with highly creative practices:

J'ai fait une réunion des délégués pour informer de ce qui se passait, en disant 'si vous vous voulez faire quelque chose, y a

pas de problèmes mais c'est pas nous, c'est vous.' Et comme dans le lot, y avait deux/trois gamins qui étaient présents à la réunion, avec des parents motivés derrière, ils ont décidé qu'ils allaient faire une table dans la cour tous les jours. Et alors pendant une semaine, ils ont posé une table tous les jours à la récré et tous les gamins venaient écrire des petits mots au préfet¹⁹⁶ (Interview 27 France).

A seventeen year old girl attending a vocational school similarly explained how, together with fellow pupils, she organised a day of action in support of a friend threatened with removal:

*On a fait des T-shirts 'Tous en soutien pour D. et M.', une grande pancarte... On a tracté, on a arrêté les voitures. En fait on était tous mobilisés! J'ai adoré, parce que dans la classe, ils sont pas trop pour ça, mais quand c'est pour soutenir, ils étaient tous là! Ils étaient tous là, tous ensemble. On arrêtait les voitures. On manquait de se faire écraser!*¹⁹⁷ (Interview 29 France)

Contrary to common representations of children and young people as lacking interest in political issues (Kerr, 1999; Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, 1998), my study thus shows that young people feeling concerned by a specific issue, such as the potential removal of a friend, were particularly

¹⁹⁶ I organised a meeting with all class representatives to inform them of what was happening, telling them: 'If you want to do something, it's no problem, but it's not us, it's YOU'. And in the group, there were some children who had come to the first meeting, with motivated parents behind. And so they decided that they would put a table in the school yard every day. And for a whole week, they had this table every day during the break, and all the children were coming to write little notes to the prefect! (Interview 27 France)

¹⁹⁷ We made T-shirts with inscriptions such as 'All in support of D. and M.', a big banner. We handed out leaflets to people, we stopped cars... We were all so involved! I loved it because in my class they are not much into it, but when it comes to supporting us, they all take part in activities. We were stopping cars, we almost had an accident! (Interview 29 France)

keen to participate in political affairs. This thereby confirms findings from previous studies (Cunningham and Lavalette, 2002; Cunningham and Lavalette, 2004; Wyness, 2006a). Such local involvement also confirms Hart's (1997) statement that children's participation is most likely to be successful at a small-scale community level. Interviewed young people acknowledged that these mobilisations were often short-lived, that is, did not turn into sustainable mobilisations:

*Cette mobilisation pour X, c'est un peu dans la veine des mobilisations lycéennes, ça fait partie de la culture lycéenne. On fait quelque chose sur le moment, mais y a pas eu de suivi ensuite. Ca a été une mobilisation assez ponctuelle.*¹⁹⁸ (Interview 16 France)

Only in cases where specific committees were set up, including both adults and young people, did young people have the structure, relationships and resources to sustain involvement. In these contexts, 'adult' and young campaigners highlighted the redefined relationships that took place between adults and young people, in particular in the teacher/pupil relationships:

Ce que je dis à ces jeunes, 'là on est en dehors de la classe, tu peux y aller tu peux me tutoyer mais dans la classe c'est non. Je suis le maître, tu es l'élève.' Là, on n'a pas de relations de maître à élève donc par conséquent, c'est des individus avec qui je

¹⁹⁸ This mobilisation for X was a bit like the high-school students' mobilisations [commonly happening in France when laws are planned to cut down school budgets or change curricula], it's part of the high-school culture. We do something at the time, but there is no follow-up. It was a punctual mobilisation (Interview 16 France).

*partage des choses, avec leur âge et le mien quoi.*¹⁹⁹ (Interview 12 France)

Young people felt acknowledged by adults and able to interact as equals, as explained by an 18-year old talking about a teacher with whom he interacted within RESF: *‘Je lui serre la main, je lui parle comme si c’était mon pote ... On n’est plus dans la relation de profs/élèves*²⁰⁰ (Interview 24 France) It seems that the success of CYP-led activities was to some extent predicated on their embeddedness within a larger context of mobilisations involving adults. Young people felt empowered because their actions were legitimised by school authorities, teachers and parents, which, in their opinion, confirmed the righteousness of their actions. Contrary to other cases of child-led social mobilisations (Cunningham and Lavalette, 2002; Cunningham and Lavalette, 2004), such children’s initiatives were indeed largely encouraged by a large majority of adults, including teachers, headteachers or parents.

Adults and young people still acknowledged some generational conflicts relating in particular to movement practices. As explained above, young people did not necessarily accept to reproduce ‘adult’ movement practices. This at times led to disputes with adult campaigners, as explained by a young person who advocated for direct action, as opposed to more moderate activities:

Après les divergences au sein du collectif, c’est surtout sur les façons d’agir, avec les ‘vieux’ de RESF tu vois. Parfois nous, on

¹⁹⁹ What I tell young people is: ‘we are outside of school, so feel free to say ‘tu’ [familiar way to address someone], but you can’t do that in the classroom. I’m the teacher, you’re the pupil.’ Here we don’t have a relationship teacher/pupil and as a consequence they are just individuals with whom I’m sharing things, with their age and mine. (Interview 12 France)

²⁰⁰ We are shaking hands. I talk to him as if he was a pal ... We are not anymore in a teacher/pupil relationship! (Interview 24 France).

*veut vraiment aller devant quoi, si on veut bloquer le lycée, on va bloquer le lycée quoi!*²⁰¹ (Interview 26 France)

Such confrontations were resolved when both older and younger campaigners took the time to discuss movement orientations during meetings, which corresponds to Rung 8 of Hart's ladder – young people and adults sharing decision-making (Hart, 1992).

Overall, we can argue therefore that children and young people were social actors in their own rights able to stage innovative and highly successful movement practices. Far from just being 'used' as mobilising tools, children and young people displayed strong solidarity bonds, political will and creativity, which were ultimately successful in asserting children and young people's agency. My analysis shows that children's participation in movement practices went from young people being assigned activities to sharing decision-making with adults, often depending on their age and adults' own readiness to acknowledge children's involvement.

Rejection of violent practices, affirmation of civil disobedience

Political violence and damage to goods or buildings have long belonged to the action repertoires of campaigning groups (Della Porta and Diani, 2006). However, my data indicates that, in both France and England, the great majority of interviewees strongly rejected any kind of violent, confrontational or radical movement practices (McAdam, 1996), as they felt such practices did not correspond to their collective identity, and as such, would potentially

²⁰¹ As for the disagreements within the committee, it's mainly about our activities, mainly with the 'old' people within RESF, you see. Sometimes, we [young people] want to move on, if we want to block entry to a school, we want to do it! (Interview 26 France)

fail to serve their objective (Ennis, 1987). The great majority of interviewees opposed hunger-strikes, which they viewed as ‘highly violent’ (Interview 7 France). This issue was most widely discussed with French campaigners given the long history of hunger strikes undertaken by undocumented migrants in France (Siméant, 1998, 1999). Hunger-strikes were opposed by individual campaigners and more widely by the RESF network: *‘En tant que RESF, c’est pas notre mode d’action, on va pas suggérer aux parents de se détruire!’*²⁰² (Interview 20 France). The main reason for such rejection was that such activities were perceived as particularly harmful to hunger strikers and the wider cause:

*Je crois que la grève de la faim, c’est toujours une action contre soi-même quelque part. On est un grand nombre dans le réseau à rejeter, enfin à dire qu’on est pour les forces de vie et pas pour les forces de mort ... On privilégie toutes les actions qui sont des actions de conviction.*²⁰³ (Interview 2 France)

Similarly, building occupations were very rarely resorted to, though the idea was less controversial than hunger-strikes. Those expressing an opinion on the matter mentioned its very limited impact. Overall, these two practices were seen by RESF actors as potentially adversely affecting RESF’s stated objective of displacing the struggle of undocumented families from the margin to the centre of social and political life. Hunger-strikes were perceived as last-resort activities undertaken by weak and marginalised actors, while RESF

²⁰² At RESF, it’s not our mode of action, we are not going to tell people to destroy themselves! (Interview 20 France)

²⁰³ I think that hunger strikes are always actions against oneself to some extent. We are many within the network to reject, I mean, to say that we are for the forces of life and not for the forces of death... We are favouring all actions that are actions of conviction (Interview 2 France).

concentrated on representing undocumented families and young people as firmly anchored within society:

*Du côté des sans papiers, quand il y a une occupation, une grève de la faim, c'est se faire voir pour qu'on en parle, parce qu'ils ont l'impression d'être en dehors de la réalité. Alors que nous on se bat pour que les sans papiers, ils soient vraiment dans la société, et nous, on y est avec eux.*²⁰⁴ (Interview 19 France)

Overall, campaigners explicitly favoured activities that created connections between migrant families and civil society actors, as explained by a French campaigner: *'A RESF, on est complètement dans l'idée de faire bouger les choses localement. On se pose vraiment la question du lien avec le reste du corps social'*²⁰⁵ (Interview 18 France). Most participants considered that active civil society or community support was sufficient to counterbalance families and young people's levels of despair and that it was always sufficiently strong for migrants not to have to resort to self-harm or hunger strikes. It is interesting to note that, in France, activists long involved with RESF and acting as mesomobilisation actors were those who had the strongest opinion on issues such as hunger strikes and building occupations. Acting as focal points for less experienced activists, they played an important role for newly recruited activists by framing which activities were to be pursued and which were to be discarded.

²⁰⁴ As for the sans papiers, when there is a building occupation or a hunger strike, it's to be seen so that we can talk about it, because they feel that they evolve outside of society. Whereas we fight because we want the sans papiers to be fully included within society, and we are in it with them. (Interview 19 France)

²⁰⁵ At RESF we are fully of the idea of changing things locally. We really want to raise the issue of the links with the rest of the social structure (Interview 18 France).

In England, the issue of hunger-strike was rarely mentioned by participants. When probed about it, most participants rejected such movement practice vehemently. The issue of seeking sanctuary in a church was raised by some campaigners. However the memories of Viraj Mendis' case, a Sri-Lankan who found sanctuary in a church in Manchester and was subsequently arrested by the Police, remained in campaigners' minds. The negative outcome of this case was apparently so traumatic that most campaigners were not ready to advise families to seek sanctuary²⁰⁶.

Supporters all concurred in their opposition to self-harm, such as hunger-strikes, or more general acts of violence. However, actors showed some inclination towards acts of civil disobedience, a concept first developed by Henry David Thoreau (1849). My data shows that most campaigners had envisaged using last-resort activities at the frontier of illegality to protect families from arrest, detention and ultimately removal, as indicated by the following quotes:

*Un jour, je dis à mon principal 'bon voilà, moi je vous préviens, si les flics débarquent au collège pour venir chercher les gamines ... vous m'appellez pour un prétexte quelconque que je comprendrai. Je déclenche l'alarme, tous les 700 élèves débarquent dans la cour, et moi j'embarque les gosses.'*²⁰⁷ (Interview 27 France)

Overall, supporters' high level of commitment can be appraised through the last-resort actions that they envisaged to protect families, which implied

²⁰⁶ In 2001, however, the press reported that one family had found sanctuary in a mosque in Lye in the West-Midlands.

²⁰⁷ I once told the headteacher at my school 'I'm warning you. If the cops once come to the school to come and pick up the girls, you call me for whatever reason that I will understand. I pull the fire alarm to get all the pupils to turn up in the school yard, and during that time I pick up the girls and leave'. (Interview 27 France)

for them to take personal risks at potentially great cost. While most ‘political’ campaigners reported having previously resorted to civil disobedience, ‘affective’ campaigners were keen to emphasise that they had until then never thought of breaking the law. They felt, however, that in instances where the state was violating crucial principles, they were entitled to resort to civil disobedience:

Au départ, j’ai vu un reportage sur Envoyé Spécial, et j’avais complètement halluciné sur ces gens qui cachaient des enfants. C’est tellement énorme que quand on n’est pas dans la situation, on se dit ‘c’est pas possible, c’est pas possible, c’est exceptionnel’ voilà et une fois qu’on est dedans on se dit ‘ben non, c’est pas exceptionnel, et c’est tout à fait possible, ça existe tous les jours à nos portes.’²⁰⁸ (Interview 32 France)

In France, in particular, this feeling was expressed by participants with pride in the righteousness of civil disobedience acts as opposed to police repression: ‘J’enfreins la loi, mais qu’ils [la police] viennent. ... C’est de la désobéissance civile et ça me plaît’²⁰⁹ (Interview 10 France). In a few emergency situations, plans of civil disobedience were turned into action. In such situations protagonists accepted to take important personal risks, such as coordinating the irregular return of a removed family or police officers informing a family about their imminent removal:

²⁰⁸ At first, I saw a documentary on Envoyé Spécial [French TV programme], and I thought I was hallucinating when I saw that some people were hiding children [to prevent their deportation]. That’s so huge that when you are not in the situation, you think ‘that’s not possible, that’s not possible, that’s exceptional’. But once you are into it, you think ‘no actually that’s not exceptional, that’s totally possible, it’s happening every day’ (Interview 32 France)

²⁰⁹ I’m breaking the law but I’m not scared of them [the Police]. That’s civil disobedience and I like to think of it that way! (Interview 9 France)

A lot of the officers who work in the police also had children at school and a few had children in C.'s class. And they actually knew that the family was gonna be picked up and taken to detention. The first time, somebody let out the information, I don't know who that was, and so it was possible to hide the family.

(Interview 23 England)

In France, the RESF network actually promoted civil disobedience acts as central to its activities. Together with other civil-society organisations, it supported a petition campaign calling for civil insurrection against the French state's oppressive policies towards undocumented families²¹⁰. This appeal echoed the call against the Debré law in February 1997, which is considered by scholars as a paradigmatic case of a campaign for civil disobedience (Hmed and Siméant, 2006; Lloyd, 2003; Mouchard, 2002). Actions transgressing the law were thereby legitimised by referring to founding normative principles, such as democracy and human rights, deemed by protesters as superior to the positive judicial order in place (Mouchard, 2002). Also, individual acts of resistance by 'regular' citizens were quickly publicised by RESF as representative of 'moderate' people's determination to oppose such state policies: *'Y a une famille qui a été hébergée par des militaires, en Bretagne, c'est balaise ça! C'est bien, c'est bien, et, ça, c'est bien que ça se sache, que c'est pas la Fraction Armée Rouge qui cache'*²¹¹ (Interview 14 France).

²¹⁰ Chasse aux enfants: notre conscience nous interdit d'être complices, Appel de la LDH, 29 Juin 2006

²¹¹ A family has been hidden by people from the military in Brittany, that's huge! It's good, it's good! It's good to publicise it, to show that it's not the Red Army Fraction hiding people (Interview 14 France).

It has been argued in France that RESF, when arguing in favour of hiding children to prevent arrests, also referred to as ‘*raffles*’²¹² (roundup), was deliberately referring to actions used by actors involved in the Résistance to protect Jewish children. The collective framing of this action certainly aimed at drawing a parallel with the Résistance movement in France. However, we can see that such instinctive readiness to hide migrant children threatened with removal is common to most campaigners not only in France, but also in England. Thus, it can be argued that such acts of resistance ‘instinctively’ came to people’s minds, rather than being solely symbolically and strategically used to make historical parallels.

From the emotional to the political affirmation: resort to institutional settings in France

I now dedicate a subsection to RESF’s coordinated activities at regional and national level since these practices relied on key local institutions in France, the school and the ‘mairie’ (town hall). This fits with the strategy advocated by French mesomobilisation actors of firmly anchoring undocumented families and young people at the heart of society (see previous subsection).

Coordinated school-based practices

In France, schools constituted central mobilisation settings, as discussed in Chapter 5. The regional and national dimension of the RESF network enabled local committees to undertake joint actions. One such action was the display of large banners against child deportations in state schools’

²¹² This expression is primarily used to refer to arrests of Jewish people by the French and German Police during the Second World War.

courtyards or on outside walls. These banners came to represent the strong support provided by state schools as institutions in France. Some banners were used to represent the opinion of children threatened with deportation, such as *'Moi je veux rester avec mes copains d'en France'*²¹³. In some cases such banners became a key public tool to warn against the deportation of a family: *'A l'école de Mme C. [mère 'sans papiers' en rétention], y avait tous les soirs un rassemblement. Ils avaient mis une banderole pour décompter les jours, tous les soirs ils descendaient la banderole pour décompter les jours!'*²¹⁴ (Interview 7 France). Another similarly symbolic action was the display of an empty chair in schools' courtyards to signify the real life impact of deportation for the deported child, his friends and teachers. This coordinated action was not followed by all RESF activists, some being concerned with the political dimension of such an act, which might have been perceived as *'too propagandistic'* (Interview 27 France) by some teachers or parents. In England, a school appealed to a similar image following the removal of a school pupil with her family: *'One of the friends of the little girl who was deported read a poem, she had written that poem 'the empty chair'. The chair was left empty in the classroom till the end of the year'* (Interview 2 England). In that particular case, nothing indicates that such an action was meant to attract favourable media coverage and public support. It was more an emotional reaction to the deportation of a friend. However, it still deployed deeply emotional and symbolic artefacts.

²¹³ I want to stay with my friends from France.

²¹⁴ At Ms. C.'s [an undocumented woman in detention] school, every evening, there was a protest action. They had hung a banner to count down the days. Every day they brought down the banner to count down the days! (Interview 7 France).

Republican sponsorships

Another key institution was used as a mobilisation setting in France: the 'mairie' (town hall). Parrainages républicains (republican sponsorships) were systematically mentioned by the majority of French participants as a central collective action at the local level. These ceremonies commonly presided over by elected city representatives, generally the mayor or local councillors, started in 2006 as an RESF activity²¹⁵. As part of a republican sponsorship, both a citizen and an elected representative commit to protect, defend and assist a family or a young person in their endeavour to settle in France.

These ceremonies attracted considerable media coverage. Such success can be attributed to the institutional settings of such ceremonies. Another ground for success relates to the national coordination of some of these local events on specific days, which contributed to raising their profile. Finally, the presence of children as targets of such sponsorship considerably increased the success of such ceremonies. In France, 'parrainer' is used to describe the act of becoming a godfather/godmother following a child's baptism. According to the Catholic tradition, this act requires from the godfather and godmother to agree to morally support the child along his/her life. Thus, 'parrainages républicains' organised by RESF, with a strong emphasis on providing protection to children and young people, strongly echoed with the Christian tradition of baptism, as the Freudian slip of a local councillor I interviewed highlighted: '*On a fait des parrainages républicains.*

²¹⁵ However the idea of Republican Sponsorship dates back to 1793, when two citizens were to sponsor another person to welcome him within the French Republic. It was then updated in 1996/1997 by collectives of sans papiers to create a broad support movement from civil society towards undocumented migrants.

*Alors les enfants par exemple d'origine arménienne, ont été **baptisés**, euh enfin ont été parrainés*²¹⁶ (Interview 34 France).

Republican sponsorships aimed to fulfil different objectives. In the first place, they provided an additional form of protection to undocumented families and young people. This protection remained purely symbolic, however, as republican sponsorships do not have any legal recognition. Republican sponsorships provided some comfort and long-term support for families and young people who had long lived in isolation from the rest of society: *'On sent que ça a une énorme importance ce jour là et voilà ils sont considérés comme citoyens tout simplement et puis ils ne sont plus seuls*²¹⁷ (Interview 6 France). In addition, participants acknowledged the relative efficacy of such practices: In only a few cases were sponsored families or young people arrested or sent back to their country of origin. Participants referred to a feeling of heightened personal responsibility resulting from a republican sponsorship. In particular, republican 'sponsors' came to play an important role for unaccompanied young people or isolated families. A secondary school teacher having sponsored young people referred to the etymology of the word 'parrain' as 'new father' to define his own role: *'Alors parrain, c'est nouveau père. Je suis pas leur père là, mais je suis en fait leur représentant*²¹⁸ (Interview 12 France).

Republican sponsorships ceremonies contributed to reinforcing feelings of collective identity and shared humanity at local and national level:

²¹⁶ We have had republican sponsorships. So the Armenian children, for instance, they were baptised. I mean, they were sponsored! (Interview 34 France)

²¹⁷ You can feel that that day has a huge importance for them because they are simply considered as citizens and they are not alone anymore (Interview 6 France).

²¹⁸ Godfather in French is new father. I'm not their father, but I'm like their representative (Interview 12 France).

*Y a eu trois parrainages où on sentait qu'il se passait quelque chose d'un autre ordre, qu'y avait une véritable communion, qu'y avait quelque chose qui se passait et là y avait quelque chose d'humain qui était fort.*²¹⁹ (Interview 31 France)

Participants mentioned the highly emotional dimension of such ceremonies, which made them *'feel proud of belonging to this movement'* (Interview 30 France). Generally taking place in the room in which weddings are celebrated, ceremonies seemingly conveyed a similar feeling of unity to celebrate the presence of undocumented families and young people.

Finally, republican sponsorships gave the opportunity for elected representatives to display their support to the cause of undocumented families and young people. Such institutional support was widely encouraged and welcome by movement actors, looking to expand the movement beyond its core supporters. The fact that republican sponsorships took place at the *mairie*, a central French institution, and were presided over by the mayor, a well-respected official, lent credibility to the cause and its supporters. Research participants emphasised the crucial role played by elected representatives in raising the visibility and credibility of the RESF network and in facilitating undocumented families and young people's access to the authorities. In most instances, those organising republican sponsorships belonged to opposition parties. However in a few instances, members of the governmental majority accepted to preside over some sponsorships. Such support helped neutralise potential criticism by government members over

²¹⁹ There have been three sponsorships where we really felt that something special was happening, that there was a true spirit of communion. Something was happening and there was something very human about it that was particularly strong. (Interview 31 France)

the radicalism of the RESF network or the marginality of the issue in the public opinion. This reinforces findings from Chapter 4 that the movement in support of undocumented families and young people in France was not a state/challenger situation. The fact that support came from institutional actors played a crucial role in 2006 in establishing the RESF network as a credible and moderate movement for a cause seen as 'worthwhile' since it was backed by well-regarded local and national politicians. It attracted broad local and national media coverage. However, after a few years, the effect of the initiative started to wear off, resulting in reduced mediatisation.

Such an initiative was not resorted to in England. However, in some cases, campaigning groups used religious rituals as movement practices (Della Porta and Diani, 2006: 183). This included vigils of prayers, masses and discussions in Religious Education classes. In one case, asylum-seeking children were baptised in the church to which the school was linked:

Father M. is very supportive, he has baptised 17 asylum seeking children, boys and girls. 18 months ago, it all started when a mother said 'my child was never baptised', other parents picked upon it and we had this fantastic celebration. (Interview 2 England)

Though this does not compare exactly to the republican sponsorship ceremonies, it also provided the opportunity for supporters to join together to celebrate the baptism of asylum-seeking children. English campaigners resorting to religious activities were keen to emphasise the feeling of collective identity conferred by such practices.

My analysis thus points towards a clear difference between the RESF network and other pro-sans papiers organisations in France described by

Siméant (1998). From 2004, a clear objective stated by RESF activists has been to firmly anchor the cause of 'sans papiers' families at the heart of French society. To that end, they relied on activities in which undocumented families were systematically supported by civil-society and institutional actors and often located in key institutional settings. The display of banners and republican sponsorships transformed the dynamics from potentially isolated activities, such as hunger-strikes - often imposed on churches - to a system of institutionalised support provided by some key institutions, such as the school and the 'Mairie'. One limit to such positioning relates to the potential loss of the political dimension that had been sought and affirmed by 'sans papiers' in France in the 1990s. According to RESF campaigners, its strategy moved beyond the political vs. humanitarian dichotomy, and focused instead on setting the terms of the debate as a matter of civil-society and institutional support for 'de facto' citizens. The question as to whether the frame transformation from political actors to social actors is negative for the 'sans papiers' movement remains open. It might be argued, however, that bystanders might be more ready to empathise with fellow 'citizens' rather than assertive 'political actors'.

8.2 Framing of movement objectives and ideas

This section considers campaigners' strategic concerns relating to the framing of their claims and ideas. My data indicates that movement discussions mainly revolved around strategies to achieve movement goals

and tactics that resonated with the context in which they operated. Participants mentioned the constraints on framing activities imposed by the emergency context in which they were situated. In most instances, campaigning groups had little time to negotiate, which, in their opinion, limited the campaigns' potential for reaching out to targeted audiences: *'I just sometimes think, it would have been so nice if we could just have sat down and been very calm, thinking 'how should we do this properly' but we never did because we were fire fighting all the time'* (Interview 23 England).

The greatest concerns for and debates among campaigners were as follows:

- Developing concrete arguments resonating with people's experience
- Delimiting the scope of campaigns, between local concerns and more general arguments
- Appealing to bystanders' values and beliefs, in particular relating to childhood

Developing concrete arguments resonating with people's experiences

In both countries, campaigners discussed the need to reach out to bystanders with concrete human stories resonating with people's everyday experiences: *'Let's not make it full of abstract meanings or slogans, let's make it about real people'* (Interview 19 England). Ideologically connoted claims, such as 'No to immigration controls' or 'Amnesty for all undocumented migrants' were seen by campaigners as potentially too distant

from targeted audiences' interest or experiences, and were therefore avoided:

*C'est une majorité de français qui s'en foutent; donc à partir de là, on va pas demander la régularisation de tout le monde. Les gens, bah oui, ils veulent bien bouger pour une famille, mais bouger pour des idées, voilà, en tous cas, ils bougeraient pas pour celle-là.*²²⁰ (Interview 28 France)

Highlighting similarities between 'non-status' families and the general public was seen a powerful tool to mobilise bystanders. In France, RESF campaigners focused on concrete arguments as an innovative move away from abstract claims in support of undocumented migrants: *'Ce qu'a fait RESF, c'est de montrer qu'un étranger, il est à côté de toi et il est pareil que toi'*²²¹ (Interview 35 France). Participants thus articulated arguments that emphasised bystanders' similarities with undocumented families. As explained by a long-term activist, the objective was to show that *'undocumented migrants are normal people, that these are the man and the woman that one meets every morning at school when they bring their child to school... and that it's not written on them that they are undocumented'* (Interview 19 France). The objective was to move away from common perceptions of the foreigner as the 'Other' through concrete examples. Interestingly, those articulating the strongest opinion on the necessity to develop concrete arguments were 'political campaigners', as described in

²²⁰ It's a majority of French people who don't care about it, so from there, we are not going to ask for a large-scale regularisation. People agree to support a family, but not to act for abstract ideas. At least, they wouldn't be ready to move for that one (Interview 28 France).

²²¹ What RESF has been able to do is to show that foreigners are close to you and the same as you (Interview 35 France).

Chapter 5. Based on their previous experience as political activists, they anticipated difficulties in attracting support due to potentially too abstract arguments: *‘La population moins engagée politiquement, elle a pas envie de se retrouver embringuée dans des grandes idéologies dont elle se dit que jusqu’à présent, ça a toujours été des échecs’*²²² (Interview 19 France). These ‘political’ campaigners were aware that a new approach to politics centred on concrete actions rather than ideology would be more likely to resonate with individuals with little interest in mainstream ‘politics’. In campaigning groups with less experienced activists, campaigners would, however, rarely question the need to tell a human story, since it was precisely the human aspect of the story that had drawn them into campaigning. Their strategy was congruent with their own experience of being drawn into activism through concrete confrontation.

Campaigning for one or all families: Local vs. universal concerns

Another issue of potential contention related to delimiting the scope of the population defended, that is, whether individual campaigning groups supported one particular family, the wider group of families liable to removal or potentially the whole group of undocumented migrants.

My data shows that these tensions were apparent in both France and England, but to different extents. The scope of campaigns was less widely discussed in English campaigning groups. In England, only three of the campaigning groups investigated openly advocated for a ban to all family

²²² The population that is less involved politically doesn’t want to be indoctrinated by big ideologies, of which they think that until now they have always failed (Interview 19 France)

deportations²²³. English campaigning groups' focus on one particular case was apparent in their title. In England, all but one bore the first name or family name of the child or family threatened with deportation. By comparison, all French campaigning committees but one used the RESF label accompanied by the name of the district, city or region in which they were located. In France, the name of the RESF network had come to prevail over the name of individual children or families.

All campaigners acknowledged a natural tendency to focus on individual cases. Some did not question such a focus on the individual, while others purposefully intended to use an individual focus as a way to increase in generality (Boltanski and Thévenot, 1991). 'Political' campaigners generally deplored the detrimental impact of state induced 'case by case' policies, which constrained campaigning activities: *'We're constrained in a way by the nature of the system which means that you always have to take individual cases... You take this individual case and say "how awful is this case?"'* (Interview 11 England)

In England, overall, the overwhelming tendency within campaigning groups investigated was to focus on individual cases, which confirms findings from the political claims-making analysis. Participants' opinions on the matter mirrored their pathways into campaigning in support of a family. 'Affective' campaigners stressed the importance of focusing on the individual, while 'political' campaigners were more concerned with the wider picture:

²²³ Other campaigning groups openly advocate for a ban to all deportations. However, they most of the time represent single migrants or families without children.

From the beginning I did say to X and Y 'You know, it's your campaign. And as far as I can see, there are two different ways of running a campaign'. I mean to simplify it slightly, but to kind of put a dichotomy. 'You can either say: "this is about us and we should be allowed to stay because we are special, because of our special circumstances, which means we shouldn't be treated like others". Or you could say "it's not just about us, it's about lots of people who are in this situation"'. And it's probably a slightly loaded question, but they were quite clear from the beginning that it shouldn't just be about them, it should be about everyone.

(Interview 19 England)

'Political' campaigners' political experience and awareness enabled them to adopt a more reflective stance:

It's not just about supporting one family, because you need lots of energy, it was to raise awareness of how we can have a structure to help families. There is so much energy spent into doing individual campaigns, you also have to get awareness raised.

(Interview 30 England)

However, few other campaigners acknowledged a need to raise awareness of the wider situation of 'non-status' families. Furthermore, 'political' campaigners highlighted the constraints imposed on campaigning as a result of negative opinions on migrants and asylum-seekers within the public. In their opinion, this was the main reason why the focus had to remain on the individual:

Some people had quite racist views saying certain things like ‘I don’t like asylum-seekers, I don’t like Asians but they [the family] are OK, they are not too bad’. They felt that they were an exception and not the rule. (Interview 23 England)

By focusing on the particularities of individual families threatened with removal, the majority of English campaigning groups thus adapted to the discursive constraints affecting asylum-seekers and migrants in England, rather than challenging them.

In France, RESF was set up with the aim of countering localist tendencies by linking up local campaigning groups in order to develop child deportations into a national social problem (see Chapter 5, Section 3). RESF’s network structure enabled local actors to concentrate on individual cases while RESF developed a broader argumentation as a social movement organisation:

Et comme dirait B.: ‘Nous, on est pour le cas par cas, le cas par cas pour tous!’ Chacun est un cas très particulier, nous sommes bien d’accord. Seulement tous doivent être considérés comme des cas particuliers!’²²⁴ (Interview 19 France)

In France, many local RESF committees thus adopted a dual strategy of adhering to RESF’s campaigning priorities while still focusing strongly on individual families: *‘Pour nous c’était important de dire “on se bat pas pour une cause, on est là pour cette famille et pas pour défendre une cause”²²⁵*

²²⁴ And as B. would say ‘We are for case by case [regularisations] but case by case for everybody! Everybody is an exceptional case, we fully agree on that. Only they all have to be considered as exceptional cases! (Interview 12 France)

²²⁵ To us, it was important to say ‘We are not fighting for a cause... We are fighting for this family and not for a cause’ (Interview 28 France).

(Interview 28 France). The existence of RESF made most French campaigners aware, however, that they were involved in support of a wider cause than just that of localised individual families: *‘On ne défend pas une famille, on défend toutes les familles. Et dans ce cas là, si on peut dire que l’accompagnement est individuel, la lutte est collective’*²²⁶ (Interview 12 France)

Mesomobilisation actors within RESF acknowledged such localist tendencies within local committees. In their opinion, a first mobilisation in support of a family would ‘enlighten’ ‘affective’ campaigners in the long term and enable them to increase in generality (Boltanski and Thévenot, 1991): *‘Sur les collectifs d’école par exemple, les anciens collectifs d’école, ils ont déjà fait ce pas de dire “oh bah si je défends ma famille, pourquoi je défendrais pas le suivant?”’*²²⁷ (Interview 20 France). RESF mesomobilisation actors advocated for a ‘learning by doing’ approach:

*On est vraiment dans le domaine de la pédagogie de l’action. Au niveau local, les gens manifestent d’abord leur soutien pour Mr untel sans que ce soit formalisé. Et puis le reste se fait par extension progressive.*²²⁸ (Interview 18 France)

Such conviction was based on experience. Indeed, individual participants all recollected having witnessed ‘affective’ campaigners going through a process of increase in generality (Boltanski and Thévenot, 1991) as a result of their involvement for one family: *‘Y a des évolutions aussi de gens qui étaient au*

²²⁶ We are not defending one family, we are defending all families. And in that case, if we can say that the help provided is individual, the struggle is collective (Interview 12 France).

²²⁷ In the school committees for instance, some of the longstanding school committees have already have made the step to ‘if I defend my family, why not defend the next one?’ (Interview 20 France)

²²⁸ It’s really a ‘learning by doing’ approach. At the local level, people show first their support for Mr X without it being formalised. And then it leads to a gradual extension [to other cases] (Interview 18 France).

départ, qui défendaient qu'une seule famille, après étaient pour le cas par cas et finalement qui étaient confrontés à plein de cas différents et du coup évoluent²²⁹ (Interview 6 France). In other instances, campaigners had themselves experienced such an evolution. This enabled them in return to better understand new recruits' concerns for individual cases as opposed to the wider cause: '*Les nouveaux, qui débarquent aujourd'hui, ben ils sont comme nous y a deux ans, faut bien leur laisser le temps, faut qu'ils fassent l'évolution eux-mêmes*'²³⁰ (Interview 20 France).

Protecting the innocent child: articulating beliefs and values central to people's lives

As explained in Chapter 2, the literature on child-focused social movements suggests that social movement entrepreneurs have long used the sentimentalised image of the child as vulnerable, passive and innocent victim (Piper, 1999) in order to secure positive media coverage and gain support (Best, 1987, 1990; Brown, 2004; Kitzinger, 1988, 1997; Roche, 1999). These practices are predicated upon the awareness that the figure of the endangered child and the threats postulated against children act as a powerful symbol in Western society (Best, 1994; Jenkins, 1995). My data shows that campaigners showed similar awareness of the incomparable power of referring to the child.

²²⁹ There have also been evolutions, like people who were at the beginning just defending one family, and who then were in favour of case by case [regularisations] and finally were confronted to plenty of different cases and as a result changed their mind (Interview 6 France).

²³⁰ The new ones, who are arriving nowadays, they are as we were two years ago. We have to give them the time, they have to progress on their own (Interview 20 France).

Child-centred framing at the local level in France and England

Local campaigners in France and England confirmed that they used child-centred arguments to arouse sympathisers and bystanders' sense of moral duty and propriety (Benford, 1993: 206):

*On sait bien que l'opinion, y a des sujets qui la touchent plus que d'autres. Je sais pas si c'est bien ou pas bien, en tous cas, il faut parler aux gens de ce qui les touchent le plus, et l'enfant ça touche l'opinion.*²³¹ (Interview 9 France).

This was similarly expressed by English campaigners:

Adults are more likely to be touched by children. A child is always more appealing than an adult, you know. People would feel sorry for X. and would warm more to him than they would if it was concentrated more on his mother. (Interview 28 England)

Campaigning groups thus tended to concentrate on children in order to ensure media coverage and public support. In a rather hostile context towards asylum-seekers in England and 'irregular migrants' in France, the child aspect considerably improved the chances of attracting media coverage: *les enfants, c'est un vecteur d'émotion, c'est un vecteur médiatique*²³² (Interview 31 France). Campaigners publicised cases with the help of child photographs or child-specific attributes in a bid to increase support:

²³¹ We know well enough that some topics are resonating with the public more than others. I don't know if it's good or bad, but at any rate, we have to talk to people about what they feel most concerned about, and childhood is of particular concern to the public (Interview 10 France).

²³² Children really are vehicles of emotions, and they are very good at attracting the media (Interview 31 France).

The other thing was that they had quite a lot of young children. I don't know it's always difficult because I believe there should be no deportations and it doesn't matter if you're adult, or you're all ugly, whatever. But the fact is that they had some very pretty photogenic young children and I think that kind of made some people sympathetic. (Interview 19 England)

Furthermore, the invocation of children provided a moral connection, as adults were likely to identify with parental desires to protect a child. Such argumentation had the potential to arouse bystanders' sense of moral duty as a parent towards children unable to fend for themselves:

When you have children, people can think 'What if it was my child? What if my child was deported?' Sometimes for adults, they don't show so much support. But then mothers would think 'This could be our child, why should they have to go? They've got nowhere to go!' and we were able to pull some kind of support. (Interview 30 England)

French and English 'political' campaigners confirmed that such emphasis on the child largely resulted from a highly constrained political context on migration issues, even though constraints were more readily acknowledged by campaigners in England. English 'political' campaigners complained about the difficulty of gaining media coverage in the case of adult asylum-seekers since *'adult asylum-seekers hardly make it to the media'* (Interview 30 England). Focusing on the child was thus more likely to ensure media coverage: *'It's quite an easy story to sell, it's easier to sell actually than the story about, you know, just a young man who is being deported and*

is on his own' (Interview 11 England). The overall political context and media landscape thus strongly influenced campaigners' framing activities, including unintentional ones. Indeed, the majority of campaigning groups investigated in England articulated child-focused arguments that did not result from a strategic purposive activity but resulted from an unconscious cognitive process. Only a few campaigners acknowledged references to children as a strategic move. To others, such an argumentation was self-evident.

RESF's framing processes as a social movement organisation

I will now discuss in more length RESF's prognostic framing activities, which provides interesting insight into the dilemmas confronting social movement organisations with regard to framing activities. As discussed previously, RESF was established in 2004 at a time when the 'sans papiers' movement was losing unity and political support. As described in Chapter 5, some activists noticed, however, the surprising success of and mass support for undocumented schooled young people: *'On a alors compris qu'on avait mis le doigt sur une question sensible et émergente, celle des jeunes sans papiers'*²³³ (Interview 1 France). In 2004, RESF thus settled on advocating for a regularisation scheme for all families with children and schooled young adults. My data shows, however, that RESF's public positioning in favour of regularising families has been the object of longstanding debates.

During interviews, many participants, but mostly 'political campaigners', referred to what they saw as the on-going dilemmas and controversies relating to the stance that RESF should take on regularisations. The main

²³³ We then understood that we had raised a sensitive and emerging issue, that of the undocumented children and young people (Interview 1 France).

dispute took place between moderates and pragmatists on the one hand, advocating for the regularisation of families, and more radical activists on the other, advocating for the regularisation of all undocumented migrants:

*Ça occasionne des débats au sein de RESF. C'est une gymnastique permanente, il y a des courants très actifs à l'intérieur du réseau, des mouvements anarchistes, autonomes, en faveur de la régularisation de tous les sans-papiers et d'autres comme la FCPE très centrés sur les enfants et jeunes majeurs. Toute la difficulté est de tenir les deux bouts de la chaîne.*²³⁴

(Interview 1 France)

RESF activists involved in national actions were more aware of these disputes than activists solely involved at the school level. Most debates on RESF's stance on regularisations took place during national meetings, which were primarily attended by mesomobilisation actors, all in favour of a large-scale regularisation:

*Y a toujours l'éternel débat qui ressort à chaque fois qui est 'oui mais on peut pas défendre que les familles, faut défendre tout le monde...' Mais ce débat se retrouve [principalement] en réunion nationale parce que c'est les plus militants qui sont là, mais qui n'est pas vrai au niveau local.*²³⁵ (Interview 20 France)

RESF's stance on regularisation was considerably less discussed within local committees, where families were of immediate concern. As discussed earlier,

²³⁴ It causes big debates within RESF. It's a constant battle. There are very active factions within the networks, some anarchist or autonomous people. Some who are strongly for the regularisation of all undocumented people, and other like the FCPE who are very much centred on children and young people. The whole difficulty is to keep together both ends of the spectrum. (Interview 1 France)

²³⁵ There is the eternal debate always comes back 'we can't only defend families, we have to defend everybody.' But this debate mainly takes place at national meetings because those attending it are the activists among us, which is not true at the local level (Interview 20 France).

in these committees, families remained the central focus and few actually supported a wider regularisation scheme: *‘Les militants des comités de soutien des écoles qui s’occupent d’une famille, de deux familles, ils ont leur légitimité. Y a pas de raison de balayer leur point de vue. Parce qu’ils sont très nombreux et c’est même la majorité’*²³⁶ (Interview 7 France).

RESF’s positioning on families and young people also led to disputes with ‘sans papiers’ and radical pro-migrant organisations advocating for the regularisation of all undocumented migrants. This divide came clearly to light in 2006 at the time of the special exercise of regularisation for families with schooled children. ‘Sans papiers’ organisations then openly criticised RESF for having failed to support single undocumented migrants: *‘Je me souviens dans Libé en juillet 2006, il y avait quand même des paroles un peu malheureuses du genre “RESF a ‘dealé’ avec Sarkozy les parents contre les célibataires”*²³⁷ (Interview 7 France).

Despite such disputes, the idea prevailed that consensus would only be achieved by adopting a relatively uncontroversial frame of argumentation, that is, advocating for the regularisation of undocumented families and young people: *‘Si on avait gueulé au début, dès le démarrage, “régularisation de tous”, on aurait fait fuir plein de gens qui étaient pas là-dessus, soit parce qu’ils étaient contre, soit parce qu’ils s’étaient même pas posé la question’*²³⁸ (Interview 20 France). Thus, even though most mesomobilisation actors at

²³⁶ Campaigners in schools’ committees who are dealing with one family, two families, they are as legitimate as anybody else. There is no reason to disregard their point of view. Because there are many of them and they actually form the majority (Interview 7 France).

²³⁷ I remember once in Libé [French left-wing newspaper] in July 2006. There were rather unfortunate comments like ‘RESF has made a deal with Sarkozy, parents against single people’ (Interview 7 France).

²³⁸ If we had shouted from the beginning ‘regularisation of all people’, we can be sure we would have got plenty of people to flee because they were not into that, either because they were against a large-scale regularisation scheme or because they had never thought about it (Interview 20 France)

RESF were in favour of regularising all undocumented migrants, they refrained from adopting such a stance publicly as RESF's activists:

*On veut, on est beaucoup à vouloir le dire, on est beaucoup qui le disons en notre nom propre, mais on ne peut pas le dire au nom de RESF parce que si on perd la FCPE, on perd beaucoup. ... On essaie de marcher au consensus tout de même.*²³⁹ (Interview 14 France)

On the ground in local committees, this also resulted in negotiations and contention between activists with regard to the stance to take during protest actions and letter writing activities. A middle ground had to be found between individual activists' own stance on the issue and RESF's overarching positioning on families:

*On se dit toujours qu'il faut pas braquer les gens... Moi maintenant quand je gueule en manif, je dis 'régularisation de tous les sans papiers'. Et de temps en temps M. vient me dire 'M., enfin!'... Elle, elle est pour la régularisation globale. Mais 'Y a des gens du PS dans la manif, alors faut les ménager'. Toujours ménager la chèvre et le chou. Après ça lui arrive aussi à elle de dire 'régularisation de tous les sans papiers'. Mais après quand il s'agit de rédiger un texte, c'est plus difficile.*²⁴⁰ (Interview 27 France)

²³⁹ Many of us want to say, and many of us say it in our name, but we cannot say it in RESF's name because if we lose the FCPE [the parents' organisations], we lose a lot ... We try to work on consensus (Interview 14 France).

²⁴⁰ We always think 'we have to make sure not to antagonise people'. But now when we are protesting, I always say 'regularisation of all undocumented people!' And from time to time, M. comes and tells me 'M. Come on!' She is also in favour of a large-scale regularisation scheme, but she tells me 'There are PS [Parti Socialiste] people in the demo, so we have to treat them with consideration!' It's always about having a foot in both camps! Sometimes she also says in public 'regularisation for all', but when it comes to writing a text, it's much harder! (Interview 27 France)

Despite its narrow focus, the RESF network consistently aimed to locate its struggle within the wider context of fights for the rights of undocumented migrants: *‘On a placé cette histoire en disant RESF se situe dans le cadre général de la lutte des sans papiers, ça concerne les jeunes majeurs, maintenant ça concerne les familles, mais c’est dans le cadre général de la lutte des ‘sans papiers’.*²⁴¹ (Interview 14 France)

This has been confirmed by the political claims-making analysis, which documented the process of extension from ‘sans papiers’ children and families to other ‘sans papiers’. An early concern among RESF’s founders was to further the cause of undocumented migrants through the culturally resonant issue of families and young people: *‘Ce que nous faisons, c’est que nous répondons aux questions se posant de manière immédiate, c’est-à-dire le cas des familles et jeunes majeurs en situation irrégulière. Et ensuite on agit pour l’élargissement du champ de la lutte*²⁴² (Interview 1 France). According to campaigners, time proved that RESF, despite its restricted focus on undocumented families, was successful in bringing the wider issues of undocumented migrants under the spotlight: *‘On s’est quand même rendu compte depuis que RESF existe que c’est une des façons de mettre la question des ‘sans papiers’ en avant dans les médias*²⁴³ (Interview 7 France). Most RESF interviewees were indeed convinced that their activities had led to a key evolution within the French population with regard to

²⁴¹ We presented the whole thing by saying ‘RESF stands in the general frame of the struggle of undocumented people. It’s about young people, now it’s about families, but it’s in the wider frame of the struggle against undocumented people (Interview 14 France).

²⁴² What we are doing is that we are tackling the questions that are being raised, in that case families and young people living irregularly on the territory. And then we act towards furthering the cause of all undocumented migrants (Interview 1 France).

²⁴³ We have noticed that since RESF exists, it has been a way to publicise the issue of undocumented people in the media (Interview 7 France).

irregular migrants. Many of them suggested that the increasing awareness and debates around undocumented migrant workers in France from 2008 partly resulted from RESF's awareness-raising work on undocumented families:

*RESF a permis de reposer la question des 'sans papiers' de manière plus générale. Ce qui se passe en ce moment au niveau des luttes de travailleurs sans papiers, je crois que c'est aussi dans le prolongement de ce qui a été fait au niveau de RESF.*²⁴⁴

(Interview 23 France)

In their opinion, RESF contributed to transforming the public image of 'sans papiers' from suffering marginal hunger-strikers to human-beings entitled to learn, live and work in France. It was their understanding that children had been instrumental in raising awareness on the seemingly unfair treatment of the wider group of migrants. Such perceptions considerably alleviated more radical activists' early fears regarding RESF's advocacy scope. It is not the aim of this thesis, however, to analyse RESF's success in creating policy openings for other groups of migrants.

By contrast, only two local campaign coordinators – both 'political' campaigners – interviewed in England mentioned such objective to further the wider cause of migrants through campaigning on children.

²⁴⁴ RESF has been able to raise the issue of undocumented people in a more general way. What is happening at the moment with regard to undocumented workers' struggle, is, in my opinion, in the continuity of what has been done with RESF (Interview 23 France)

Specific framing concerns in England

I will now discuss two main issues that were only raised by English campaigners. These related to the humanitarian/political and the asylum/economic migration dichotomy.

Humanitarian vs. Political argumentation

There was a clear division between two types of campaigning activities in England: on the one hand, campaigning groups aiming to develop a political argumentation and, on the other, campaigning groups opting for a purely humanitarian argumentation. In that particular context, humanitarian campaigners postulated an apolitical stance based on a strict focus on children: *'We were not being very political. Just, you know we are here to safeguard children. They shouldn't remove children from their school where they are settled and happy, so that's the point'* (Interview 2 England). Most 'affective' campaigners, as described in Chapter 5, were cautious of not being seen as political. To that end, these campaigning groups focused on the particular case at stake, above and beyond wider political issues: *'We basically organised a committee to represent our views, not to argue the political point, but just about how this affects the children'* (Interview 15 England). They showed a particular distrust in mainstream politics as a way to achieve social change. In this particular context, politicians' involvement was experienced with fear by some campaigners:

There is a danger of course playing the political card, as well, because it can become a political football, you know. And I think we managed that because we didn't make it a political football, the

MP was able to deal with it as a humanitarian case and bring it on very effectively (Interview 13 England).

A majority of campaigners seemed to associate politics with party politics rather than activism towards social change, as demonstrated by the following comment: *'when it starts to get to the political side, I'm like, ugh [sign of disgust]'* (Interview 26 England). This might explain why campaigning groups were particularly reluctant to be seen as political.

On the other hand, some campaigning groups opted for an approach that was more openly political, and largely influenced by the 'de-facto leader's' stance. These stances were often nurtured by on-going contacts and links with other pro-migrant and anti-racist organisations. In one particular campaigning group, disputes erupted between advocates favouring a political argumentation on the one hand and those advocating for a humanitarian stance on the other. *'There were people who would say things like "let's not make it political, let's make it about the children". But you know to my mind, that's completely the wrong approach'* (Interview 19 England). Families were ultimately the ones deciding on the advocacy scope.

Asylum-seekers vs. economic migrants

Directly mirroring national debates on asylum, supporters indicated that the way to depict families' status – asylum-seekers/refugees or migrants – was of particular concern. Supporters favouring a humanitarian stance insisted on referring to families as asylum-seekers/refugees, that is, those deserving of protection, as opposed to 'economic migrants' or 'bogus' asylum-seekers: *'I suppose one of the distinctions we have made about refugees is the*

'economic migrant' versus 'asylum-seeker'. Because again, people just lump them all together, don't they?' (Interview 17 England). It was important for these supporters to differentiate the families they supported from other families who would fit the 'economic migrant' model. There was a conscious move on the part of supporters to represent families as asylum-seekers and not as migrants coming for economic purposes and thus emphasise their reasons for claiming asylum:

There was another thing. It was a double-edged sword. To ensure that the application for asylum was given the best possible chance, there had to be a strong emphasis on the risk to the family's life if they went back to Pakistan (Interview 21 England).

The notion that campaigning would help a family secure a safe haven was often a central campaigning argument. Such positioning, far from constituting a purely strategic move, mirrored campaigners' own views on the difference between asylum-seekers and economic migrants, discussed in Chapter 6.

To conclude this section, we can argue that arguments brought forward in France and England were strongly influenced by the discursive opportunities available to campaigners. Indeed, discursive strategies in both countries were very clearly shaped by the state's positioning on childhood and migration and previous mobilisations in these issues. Common perceptions of childhood imparted rhetorical advantages to campaigning groups.

The analysis of movement activities and claims suggests that strategies and tactics at times overlapped and at times differed depending on actors'

experience of activism and recruitment pathways. I identified two main approaches in the way activists campaigned:

- The first approach suggests some equivalence between the strategies pursued by campaigners and the tactics they resort to. In such instances, the strategic objective was to prevent a family from being removed, and the tactics devised to achieve this aim directly mirrored such objective. It can be argued that the great majority of 'affective' campaigners devised tactics that related directly to a specific family or child.
- In both France and England, all 'political' campaigners pursued a second approach. In this case, they pursued a strategy of furthering the cause of all migrants, while using tactics that would legitimise their actions and further their public image as moderate groups supporting children and families. The objective was thereby to raise awareness on specific cases and thanks to a 'learning by doing' approach increase people's understandings of migration. This can to some extent be described as partly or fully 'opportunistic tactics'.

As a result, despite differences in strategies, which best appear in the second section of this chapter, campaigners' tactics bore striking similarities. The presence of active meso-level actors in France enabled, however, the emergence of institutional practices and more general claims that provided the opportunity to move beyond practices and claims in support of one single family.

Conclusions

I have shown in this chapter the large degree of strategic planning involved at different levels of mobilisation in France and England. Campaigns in France and England displayed similar movement practices, which were principally based on staging large amount of support for children and families threatened with removal. A conscious strategic move in both countries related to the strong focus on the child and understandings of childhood as a 'sacralised' time of innocence in movement practices and discourses. In both countries such framing was perceived as the main means through which to achieve resonance. However, the analysis also indicates that children and young people played a crucial role as social movement actors in their own right, suggesting campaign directions and activities and organising movement practices, including spontaneous ones with great success. Violent actions, including self-harm, were vehemently rejected for fear of displacing these families' struggle to society's margin.

Overall, the main differences between France and England relates to the limited discursive opportunities available in England, considerably constraining campaigners' framing of claims. A majority of participants here suggested that their campaigning group argued strongly for the particular case of one family, without making links to the wider context, in humanitarian terms. In addition, in the absence of an established 'non-status' migrants' movement in England, campaigners had little opportunity to take advantage of previously articulated frames. By contrast, the analysis of RESF's framing

alignment processes in France suggests that RESF's meso- and macro-mobilisation actors attempted early on to link up their claims to the wider cause of the 'sans papiers' in France. It was their opinion that the child focus had opened the door to greater awareness on the 'sans papiers' as being part of society, rather than at the margin. This strongly corroborates results from Chapter 4.

Chapter Nine: Discussion and Conclusions

The overall objective of this thesis was to investigate grassroots mobilisations against family deportations in a comparative fashion. In particular, I mapped the field of contention through a political claims-making analysis, which enabled me to look into both proponents and opponents of such issues, and the claims brought forward by supporters of 'non-status' families. Based on this preliminary analysis, I then interviewed grassroots campaigners in both France and England to understand more precisely how and why actors mobilise, the factors for sustained involvement or disengagement, and the tactics devised to attract public support in terms of both practices and arguments. This discussion chapter concludes the thesis and aims to emphasise the significance of my results within the context of existing theories and the wider literature. In particular, I will discuss the results of the previous chapters in light of the three main questions raised in the introduction:

- How does the child variable influence mobilisations?
- How do national contexts affect campaigning activities?
- To what type of 'social movement' do these mobilisations belong?

I make use of findings presented in all my different chapters to answer each individual question. To answer the third main research question mentioned above, I compare my results to the definition offered by Walgrave and Verhulst (2006) of 'new emotional movements', previous studies on 'morality' politics (Goode and Ben-Yehuda, 1994), and moral activism (Reynaud,

1980), as well as solidarity movements (Guigni and Passy, 2001). I thereby attempt to demonstrate that, while French mobilisations fit the model of solidarity movements, mobilisations in England include most characteristics of 'new emotional movements'. However, mobilisations in both countries have in common a strong moral component, which gives some indication of a new approach to politics.

Finally, I consider the key contributions made by my thesis to the different disciplines in which it is situated: sociology of social movements, sociology of childhood, and the study of public attitudes to asylum and migration. I also consider the extent to which my study may potentially benefit advocacy groups, social movement organisations and policy-makers.

9.1 The Child variable

My thesis points to key ways in which the child variable has influenced the social mobilisations investigated. First, children play an important role as social actors. Second, the concept of childhood impacts upon the mobilisations in a variety of ways.

Children as social actors

Chapter 5 has shown the key role of relational ties to a child or young person liable to removal in spurring 'affective' campaigners into action. In most instances, actors would not have been aware of the specific situations of families without the presence of children as intermediaries. Additionally, I

have shown in Chapter 6 that identity salience enhanced participants' motivation. Children, certainly more than any other human-beings, have the potential to activate individuals' salient identities and ensuing responsibilities as a parent, teacher, or simply as an adult feeling responsible for a child. Interviewees systematically referred to the identity that was central to their 'sense of self' (Calhoun, 1991), which, in their opinion, justified helping a child and their family.

In Chapter 5 and 8, I insist on another role played by children and young people, that of individual and collective social movement actors. The political claims-making analysis (Chapter 4) provided limited evidence that children played an important role as campaigners. I highlighted in Chapter 8 the potential reasons for such absence, which included issues regarding parental consent and journalists' own biases relating to children's roles in mobilisations. However, interviews with participants aged sixteen or over²⁴⁵ suggested that children often played three key functions as active movement agents. First, both children liable to removal and their fellow pupils acted as recruiting agents, as mentioned above. Second, children were also individual campaigners in their own right, spontaneously suggesting campaign directions and activities. In many instances, children directly threatened with removal acted as advocates for their family, translators and intermediaries. Finally, my data indicates the key role played by children as collective actors. The school setting, online networks and other socialising groups provided for large-scale mobilisations of children and young people, particularly welcome

²⁴⁵ Children under the age of sixteen were not interviewed for the purpose of the research project. However, I had informal discussions with younger children, which helped me refine my analysis. I aim to undertake research with children aged eight to fifteen to further refine my results.

by social movement actors in the context of public campaigning pursuing a clear 'logic of numbers'.

Childhood as a concept

The impact of common understandings of childhood was a central concern behind my research. I wanted to investigate the extent to which conceptions of childhood influenced mobilisations. In particular I aimed to investigate the extent to which they had an impact on participants' motivations to mobilise, and, further, whether these were strategically mobilised in campaigning activities in France and England. It is common to view campaigners involved in support of children as being driven by purely strategic concerns (Best, 1987, 1990; Brown, 2004; Kitzinger, 1988, 1997; Roche, 1999). This study precisely attempted to disentangle strategic concerns from 'deeper' cognitive and emotional processes.

In Chapter 4, I argued that claims-makers in both France and England referred to the high sentimental value attached to children and to their vulnerability when advocating against child deportations. Similarly, in Chapter 6, I showed that 'Western' conceptions of the Child as innocent and in need of protection constituted powerful mobilising factors in both France and England. It was precisely the conception that childhood is universal that spurred campaigners into not differentiating between children in an irregular situation and other children. Both my quantitative and my qualitative data show that this concept is most influential in England, where some participants

referred to the specific nature of childhood to differentiate between children and adults with regard to deservingness and entitlements²⁴⁶.

As shown in Chapter 8, the ‘universality of childhood’ as a time of innocence and vulnerability also provided a powerful rhetorical and tactical device for social movement actors aiming to attract support and gain media coverage. Associated perceptions such as vulnerability and innocence were drawn upon in movement activities featuring children, such as child choir songs, drawing and postcard-sending. In France, republican sponsorship ceremonies similarly drew upon common conceptions of children as in need of adult protection. Within RESF in France, the awareness of the political and cultural resonance of child-centred concerns constituted the main reason for advocating for the regularisation of families with children, and young people. This child focus remained, however, a source of disputes within RESF, criticised by some activists as too narrow.

Overall this research thus uncovers a complex and multi-faceted understanding of the child that encompasses understandings of the child as both a social actor and a vulnerable human being in need of protection. It has to be said, however, that the understanding of children as social actors did not constitute a campaigning frame in either France or England. Social movement entrepreneurs preferred emphasising the idea that children liable to removal were in need of protection rather than responsible social actors. This shows that defining the child as a political agent is not yet seen as culturally resonant, while its innocent and vulnerable counterpart maintains

²⁴⁶ By contrast, the majority of French participants, as well as some English interviewees, did not differentiate between children and adult migrants and viewed them all as similarly entitled to support.

its cultural relevance. This leads me to argue that it is precisely the diverse and hybrid character and understanding of childhood that ensured broad support for these mobilisations. While it appealed to many adults' understanding of childhood as a time of protection, it enabled children and young people to ascertain their role as social actors, able and willing to take part in decisions affecting their lives. These results refine results from the Childhood Studies literature referring to the 'competing discourses on childhood' (Wyness et al., 2004), that is, the perception of children as in need of protection on the one side and children as social actors on the other. My analysis indicates that, rather than competing with each other, these conceptions were mutually enforcing in the context of mobilisations against child deportations.

9.2 Impact of national contexts on social mobilisations

Throughout this thesis, I attempted to show the central role of the national context in enabling and/or constraining social mobilisations. The following section aims to highlight the different ways in which opportunities and constraints impacted on mobilisations in France and England.

First and foremost, 'non-status' children's obligation to attend school as enshrined in law provided in both countries a crucial opportunity for mobilisation. In both England and France, schooling is compulsory for all children, including asylum-seeking and undocumented children. By comparison, schooling is not mandatory for children without leave to remain in some German Länder. Such a situation as in Germany naturally reduces

opportunities for children and their families to build relationships with school pupils and families, and thus reduces the likelihood that the community will stand up against a family's deportation. The national context in France and England is also directly responsible for the crucial role of the school as one of the only institutional settings in which 'non-status' parents have the opportunity to meet with the majority community. Similarly, the crucial role played by the school at the local level in both France and England provided remarkable opportunities for mobilisations. Individual schools provided ideal staging grounds for mobilisation as established collective settings as well as strong links with the media and local decision-makers.

However, despite similar characteristics, the comparison of social mobilisations in France and England reveals significant differences that can be traced back to the specificities of each country's political context and culture. Two main differences appear most strongly: first, structural obstacles present in England have largely constrained the movement. Second the discursive opportunities for the movement are more limited in England, as compared to France.

Structural differences

My data indicates that structural features of the state and the political system played a key role in accounting for variation in mobilisations between France and England. I identified two key differences relating first to campaigners' access to formal decision-making and second to the absence of an issue-specific mobilising structure in England.

Access to formal decision-making

In contrast to England, the decision-making system in France is fairly open with regard to regularisation procedures. Prefectures are in charge of regularisations at the department level. This provides some opportunities for campaigners to exert influence on the decision-making process at the local level. Participants acknowledged such entry points, which, in return, reinforced their convictions regarding their ability to initiate change. By contrast, campaigners' access to the decision-making process in England is much more limited. Decisions are made by the Home Office, which does not offer any leverage points for challenging groups at the local level. This had an important impact on perceptions of outcomes by campaigners and, as a result, impacted on their participation in the long-term. Such closed access to decision-making constituted for many participants a strong barrier to sustained participation. Indeed, participants were particularly pessimistic about the probability of success and of exerting change. It should be noted however that such perceptions contrast with official data. As described in Chapter 2, more than 24,000 families with children obtained leave to remain between 2003 and 2008 (Home Office, 2009), and, in 2008, less than 5% of asylum removals were children, as the results from a Freedom of Information request indicate.

Another important but more volatile structural aspect relates to the positioning of the party in power. According to Siméant (1998), 'sans papiers' movement in France are more likely to be successful under a right-wing government, since they can benefit from the support of left-wing parties and provide the opportunity for left-leaning individuals and groups to express their

discontent. Though not fully probed, this assertion seems to be confirmed by this study. In France, the Socialist Party, in opposition since 2002, constituted an important ally for RESF, as identified in Chapter 4. By contrast, in England, campaigners have had to confront the harsh line of the Labour government on migration since 1997 without being able to rely on the Conservative Party for support (despite some local exceptions). This strongly contrasted with pre-1997 pro-migrant mobilisations, in which the Labour Party constituted a strong ally (Statham, 2001).

Issue-specific nationwide mobilising structure

In England, grassroots campaigning groups suffered from the absence of a wider network. My data indicates that campaigners particularly deplored the absence of mesomobilisation actors available to mobilise and motivate local groups. By contrast, the presence of RESF as a network allowed for the emergence of mesomobilisation actors experienced in campaigning in support of families threatened with deportations. These were crucial both to supporting newly created grassroots committees and ensuring the sustained commitment of such groups through the ebbs and flows of campaigning, as shown in Chapter 7. The absence of such a network in England, despite an acknowledged need for it and previous attempts, can be explained by a conjunction of different factors.

First, there are factors internal to mobilisations. Local campaigners often turned to 'external' local actors for help, such as the local MP or the local newspaper. By comparison, French campaigners generally turned to fellow union members or, once set up, to other RESF committees. Similarly,

in England, campaigners' understanding of such mobilisations as 'community-based' mobilisations potentially limited their impression that their experience was transferable.

However, there are also factors external to these local mobilisations. Among these, the structural weakness of unions – weakened under Margaret Thatcher's government – was consistently mentioned by participants. Furthermore, key informants criticised unions' close political links to the Labour Party, which made unions' representatives reluctant to criticise the Labour Government on its immigration agenda. Participants also pointed to the lack of connection between child welfare organisations or children's charities and local groups campaigning against child deportations. Such large structures, specialised in lobbying and agenda-setting (see Chapter 2), could have potentially provided resources and information, particularly in relation to effective campaigning tactics. Finally, ideological differences within the wider 'pro-migrant' movement seem to have impeded networking efforts, as recurrently mentioned by key informants. In particular, child-centred campaigns seem to have suffered from criticisms from established radical activists who would have been in a position to contribute to the linking up of local campaigning groups.

Another factor to take into consideration relates to the opening of opportunities experienced by campaigners in France through the enactment of the two circulars in 2005 and 2006 (see Chapters 4 and 6). These two circulars largely contributed to shaping the movement in support of *sans papiers*' children, by legitimising RESF's concerns, and providing increased political and media attention. First, the October circular, by setting a deadline

for removals, created momentum that strongly contributed to raising RESF's profile (see Chapter 4) and recruiting new campaigners, shocked by the potential opening of the '*children's hunt*' (chasse à l'enfant). Second, the exceptional regularisation procedures declared in the June circular caused outrage among campaigners upon discovery of its arbitrariness (see Chapter 6). By contrast, there was no such national 'opening of opportunities' in England, which could have potentially helped shape a national movement.

Discursive Opportunities/constraints and framing

Chapter 8 on framing activities shows that English supporters were more limited in their framing of claims than their French counterparts. The majority of English campaigning groups adopted a humanitarian discourse centred on beneficiaries' specificities as children and/or refugees. The Child and ideas attached to protecting children provided strong incentives for lending support and shaped movement activities in a context where the Labour Government strongly emphasised its child-centred agenda, best represented by the *Every Child Matters* framework. However, in most instances, English campaigners made the conscious decision not to extend claims to economic migrants and not to politicise their claims, which they felt would not resonate with the political and cultural context. This was strongly influenced by the government and tabloids' stance on genuine refugees vs. economic migrants. Similarly, supporters' own comments on asylum-seekers deservingness of protection gave an indication of the wider influence of the state and media-sponsored discursive context in England.

By contrast, in France, the at times widely publicised movement in support of undocumented migrants sensitised the population to this cause and prepared individual campaigners to extend their willingness to help to single adults. Large-scale regularisation schemes, such as that undertaken by the Left wing French government in 1998 indicated a readiness on the side of the state to publicly acknowledge and support irregular migrants. By contrast, successive British governments were always strongly reluctant to large-scale regularisations, favouring instead back-door immigration amnesties, which they kept away from the public spotlight (Travis, 2010).

Overall, my thesis contributes to emphasising the research benefits warranted by comparative research. Indeed, the comparison of grassroots mobilisations in support of ‘non-status’ children in France and England, that is, mobilisations with similar objectives and forms of mobilisations, has enabled me to highlight key differences relating to each country’s national context. These partly account for variations in the dynamics of mobilisations, the type of claims made and perceived outcomes. In that regard, one key outcome of this research relates to the identification of the multiple – real or perceived – constraints affecting mobilisations in England, as compared to France. This influences not only campaigners’ framing activities, but also their own reasons for mobilising and their perceptions of success.

9.3 What type of social movements do the mobilisations resemble?

Based on the political claims-making analysis and in-depth interviews, I am now in a position to discuss in more depth the nature of the social mobilisations investigated. In Chapter 4, the results from the political claims-making analysis suggested that grassroots mobilisations in support of children and young people threatened with removal in France were predominantly solidarity mobilisations similar to previous movements in support of undocumented migrants or other disadvantaged populations (Guigni and Passy, 2001). I also argued that social mobilisations in England seemed to fit better Walgrave and Verhulst's (2006) model of 'new emotional movements' in their instrumental dimension.

In-depth interviews helped towards refining these results. First they emphasised similarities in both countries: the importance of social ties to 'non-status' children for 'affective' campaigners, and participants' personal sensitivity to protecting children, which had not appeared as clearly in the political claims-making analysis. Furthermore, in-depth interviews and participant observation have enabled me to better comprehend the crucial role of emotions in spurring actors into action (Chapter 6), sustaining their involvement (Chapter 7) and as a campaigning tool through their public expression during movement practices in France and England (Chapter 8).

In-depth interviews also enabled me to analyse more precisely the differences between the nature of mobilisations across the two countries, such as the difference in campaigners' readiness to support adult migrants. In France the great majority of actors acknowledged such readiness and

expressed opposition to differentiating between 'non-status' children and adults. By contrast, a majority of campaigners in England openly differentiated between asylum-seeking children and adults, or between families and other groups of migrants. They indicated thereby their limited inclination toward supporting the wider group of migrants.

Furthermore, interviews indicated that all English campaigners involved in support of a family threatened with deportation had disengaged from involvement once the case had been resolved or the family removed. Their involvement was more ephemeral than that of French interviewees, who after supporting a first case as 'affective campaigners', remained involved with RESF to support other cases as 'political campaigners'.

Let us now discuss each of the features identified by Walgrave and Verhulst (2006) as being common to 'new emotional movements': victimhood and emotions, absence of clear-cuts demands, organisational weakness, support from media, broad elite endorsement, and heterogeneous activists. The aim, thereby, is to see the extent to which mobilisations in France and England fit the model created by Walgrave and Verhulst.

Victimhood and emotions (and childhood)

According to Wagrave and Verhulst (2006), 'new emotional movements' are marked by their strong emphasis on victimhood and the crucial role of emotions. Based on my own data and Walgrave and Verhulst's analysis, it seems appropriate to complement the category 'victimhood and emotions' with childhood. Indeed, all but one of the cases investigated by the authors

consider child-centred mobilisations, where protecting children appeared as a central reason for involvement.

I have shown in this thesis that in both countries victimhood and emotions played a central role in spurring actors into involvement. The 'moral shock' (Jasper and Poulsen, 1995) experienced by campaigners and the feeling of responsibility ensuing from it, constitute a central factor for their involvement. However, who is considered as a victim by movement actors differs between countries. I have shown that French actors are more likely than their English counterparts to include all other 'non-status' migrants within the group of victims of state practices. By contrast, many English campaigners judge it necessary to differentiate between children and their parents, or families and single adults, as well as between asylum-seekers and economic migrants.

No clear-cut demands

I have shown that, in France, campaigners were more assertive as to what should be done for the group of 'non-status' families and beyond for undocumented migrants living in France. They felt that their views were being represented by RESF, which advocated for the regularisation of all families and young people. By contrast, besides few exceptions, English participants were not clear about what should be done. They were spurred into action for one specific family, with the aim to prevent their deportation. Beyond that, few were in a position or willing to articulate clear-cut demands. This might be explained by the absence of a national network in England articulating clear-cut demands.

Organisational weakness

I have shown that, in both France and England, local mobilisations were centred around the school, and in some cases the Church in England. However, beyond the local level is where mobilisations in France contrast most with mobilisations in England. Indeed the creation of RESF in 2004 as a national network formalising demands and providing the structure for grassroots campaigning groups considerably impacted on any new committee set up after that date. Since then, RESF has acted as a social movement organisation, independent from other French pro-migrant organisations. Though each local committee maintained some autonomy, they heavily relied on mesomobilisation actors involved at regional level and on online networks to seek help. These mesomobilisation actors were for the greatest part long-time activists with remarkable experience. They were thus highly organised and very well connected.

By contrast, individual campaigning groups in England emphasised their spontaneous set-up as a community group, but did not seek to organise at a wider level. Besides a few exceptions, they stressed their relative isolation from other pro-migrant organisations, and the awareness that the group was only meant to endorse the one case of a family threatened with removal. As such, it can be argued that they suffered from organisational weakness.

Support from Mass Media

In both countries, campaigners emphasised the generally highly positive and compassionate media coverage. The political claims-making analysis

furthermore showed that these issues received ample media attention in two of the main broadsheet newspapers in France, *Le Monde*, and England, *The Guardian*. At the local level, such large media coverage partly resulted from close relationships to local journalists, but mainly occurred as a result of the strong emotional figure of the victimised child. As stressed by a French campaigner: 'the child is a vector of emotion that has media impact'. The media were thus sympathetic to the cause.

Elite endorsement

The political claims-making analysis has demonstrated that elites in both France and England were ready to endorse mobilisations against child deportations. As compared to other pro-migrant mobilisations, my analysis has indicated that mobilisation were not characterised by a state/challenger conflict, but involved state elites as allies. In France, Ségolène Royal supported RESF's demand to regularise families with schooled children. Similarly, in England, many local MPs supported local campaigns fighting against a family deportation. Within the Government, comments made by Ministers suggested that they lent support to such mobilisations, even though they might not have been perceived as such by campaigners. Comments made by the then British Home Secretary, David Blunkett, at the time of the family amnesty are in that regard representative of broad elite endorsement: 'it would be not only disproportionate but wrong to uproot those children from school and from the community'(Marr, 2003). The following statement by the then Interior Minister, Nicolas Sarkozy, quoted in Chapter 2, suggests a similar support by the French government:

When a child is born in France or arrived there as a very small child, is schooled in France, does not speak the language of his country of origin, and therefore has no link with this country, it would be very cruel to forcibly remove him or her. (Sarkozy, 2006)

Such reaction is especially interesting as my analysis has shown that grassroots group clearly assigned blame to the Executive. Opposing such mobilisations was potentially too costly for the Government in both France and England, which did not want to appear to be disregarding children.

Heterogeneous activists

I argued that the presence of children considerably contributed to the heterogeneity of activists. Indeed, children attracted into campaigning 'affective' campaigners whose identity as parent, teacher or school pupil was activated by the child's or young person's situation. Additionally, the situation of exclusion experienced by children and young people as 'non-status' migrants drew into campaigning 'political' campaigners – such as 'Socialists' and/or Trade-Unionists – long involved in support of excluded and marginalised actors. Results are summarised in Table 9.1.

Table 9.1: Summary of findings (based on Walgrave and Verhulst's (Walgrave and Verhulst, 2006) table)

	Mobilisations in France	Mobilisations in England
Victimhood, childhood and emotions	+	++
No clear-cut demands	- -	-
Organisational weakness	- -	++
Support from mass media	++	++
Elite endorsement	+	+
Type of social movement	Mobilisations with strong emotional components, relying on a network – RESF – adopting a political claims-making role	Instrumentally-oriented 'new emotional mobilisations'

As discussed above, two issues strongly differentiate the mobilisations in France and England: the issue of organisational weakness and that of clear-cut demands. Mobilisations in England fit well the model developed by Walgrave and Verhulst. These mobilisations in England tend to be instrumental to the extent that they aim to prevent the removal of a child and their family.

In France, RESF as a nationally well connected network relying on highly organised mesomobilisation actors does not suffer from organisational weakness. Such strength has furthermore strongly contributed to it adopting clear-cut demands calling for the regularisation of families and young people threatened with removal. These results suggest that mobilisations in France do not directly fit the 'new emotional movements' model. The publicly stated political dimension of such altruistic mobilisations suggests, rather, that these mobilisations belong to the wider solidarity movement, characterised by its

strong political affirmation (Guigni and Passy, 2001). However, their strong emotional component places them close to ‘new emotional movements’.

It is important, however, to acknowledge the strong similarities between these mobilisations. The following table succinctly lists these similarities:

Table 9.2: Similarities between mobilisations in France and England

Local anchorage of mobilisations
Importance of the school as a local site for movement practices
Sensitivity to children
Feeling of injustice resulting from state decisions and policies, in particular with regard to children’s potential uprooting
Importance of education as a ‘principle’
Longstanding and personal relationships between campaigners and ‘non-status’ families resulting in a greater awareness of migrants’ lives
Children’s participation as social movement actors
Involvement outside of traditional political structures, such as unions or political parties

Overall, this study has more broadly investigated a new approach to politics, characterised by a strong moral component, and situated outside of traditional political structures such as political parties or trade unions. The analysis showed the extent to which individual actors were keen to organise collectively at the local level to fight a cause they viewed as particularly worthwhile. To that end they were reluctant to organise within the frame of traditional political structures, and preferred instead to create ephemeral committees or, in the French case, organise into a new loosely organised network, the RESF. Another important aspect relates to the central moral or civic component of these mobilisations, which strongly appeared in both

actors' collective claims-making activities (Chapter 4) and their individual justification for involvement (Chapter 6). Beyond the object of this investigation, such a 'principled' approach to politics is likely to be found in relation to other contentious issues, such as those relating to climate change, and in other countries.

Having identified such common characteristics might therefore provide useful guidance for researchers aiming to study collective action in support of 'non-status' children in other countries. I mention below that other countries, such as Germany, Austria or the United States of America have witnessed similar outbursts in support of children and families threatened with removal, which would lend themselves particularly well to a case-study analysis or a comparative study.

9.4 Contributions to the discipline

It is hoped that this research will contribute to the different fields of study in which it is situated: sociology of social movements, childhood studies and the study of public attitudes to migrants. I will consider these contributions in turn.

Sociology of social movements

On a theoretical level, my thesis has pointed to the crucial importance of combining social movement theories that some scholars view as potentially incompatible. Chapters 4 to 8 are the result of a rich combination of analyses based on political process, resource mobilisation, framing, and identity

politics theories, and show how fruitful the application of specific theories to different phases of mobilisations can be.

Furthermore, I attempted include the study of children within social movement research. My research shed light on the role of children as social movement actors, an aspect underrepresented in social movement research. Other research has been undertaken on child-centred mobilisations (Margolin, 1978; Walgrave and Verhulst, 2006). However, these have consistently omitted to look into the impact children might have on the type of movement practices chosen by social movement actors, or on the active role played by children in recruiting movement actors, besides a few exceptions (Cunningham and Lavalette, 2002; Cunningham and Lavalette, 2004). I therefore hope the research in this thesis will help to bring child-centred and child-led mobilisations into the field of social movement research.

Childhood studies

As pointed out by Prout et al. (2006), research on children's participation has been largely disconnected from research on adult participation. My thesis thus attempted to bridge the gap between these two research fields, by looking into social mobilisations that involved adults, children and young people. This enabled me to look at the interactions between adults and children in a joint endeavour, and thus consider children and young people's agency in the specific setting of campaigns against child deportations, while considering adults' understandings of childhood. My research has thus provided an illustration of the diverse and complex understandings of childhood in Western societies, as exemplified in France and England.

In particular, I showed how the Western conception of the child as vulnerable and in need of protection remains a highly resonant concept for many individuals within society. This strongly contrasts with much of the literature within childhood studies, which has called for 20 years for a rethinking of such a conception. While I fully stand within the tradition calling for reconceptualising childhood, I argue it is important for academia to remain aware of society's views, alongside developing knowledge on what society *ought* to think about childhood. By focusing solely on child activities, one is likely to forget how ingrained the concept of vulnerable and innocent children is within society, and how this concept informs many of adults' reactions. Much of the literature discussing such conceptualisation views it as a strategic tool used by actors aiming to maximise support. While my thesis partly supports such an argument, as indicated in Chapter 8, it also shows how entrenched it is in adults' views.

Migration studies

Overall, this study has shown how important it is not to reify boundaries between adult and child-centred research on migration. I have suggested in Chapter 2 that the academic literature on migrant children on the one side and migrant adults on the other side is highly differentiated. Leading studies on migrants in France and the UK, as well as most recent studies on state's practices towards asylum-seekers and undocumented migrants have tended to consider the situation of children and families only at the margin. In the same way, studies on the situation of asylum-seeking children in immigration

detention or subjected to welfare restrictions only marginally refer to the situation of asylum-seeking adults. Such separation between children, families and adults also tends to solidify boundaries between different categories of migrant according to their age and parental status. However, my study has indicated the numerous overlaps at different levels between adult and child migrants. While campaigners might be first and foremost concerned by children's situation when mobilising, sustained involvement enables supporters to discover a system that affects not only children but also adults.

It is hoped that scholars working on pro-migrant mobilisations will take into account the potential role played by children and young people at different stages of the mobilisation process in support of 'non-status' migrants. Furthermore, scholars should be careful not to discount these mobilisations as 'non-political' as many participants in France and England acknowledged the inherently political dimension of their involvement.

9.5 Practical recommendations

The issue investigated in this thesis – 'non-status' children in France and England – is highly topical. As a result of my research, I am thus in a position to suggest some relevant policy and practical recommendations.

As far as pro-migrant organisations are concerned, my research highlights the importance of 'social ties' in spurring 'affective' campaigners with no previous experience of political activism into action. It also shows how crucial individuals' 'identity salience', as parent, teacher, socialist or

Christian, is to their mobilisation. A potentially useful advocacy angle would therefore be to resist any state attempt to reduce social interactions between 'non-status' migrants and the majority society. In a more pro-active manner, securing the right to work for asylum-seekers would certainly provide opportunities for greater social interactions. The right to work is mostly approached by advocates and researchers as a way to prevent 'non-status' migrants' destitution. However, my data indicates that it would also strengthen relationships between workers, and thus encourage them to get involved in support of migrants, in their role as 'colleagues'.

In England, more particularly, this thesis might help actors involved in advocacy work in support of asylum-seeking children, such as the Refugee Children's Consortium, to become aware of the strength of grassroots mobilisations in support of families threatened with deportation. All actors would ultimately gain from greater interactions between large NGOs and local campaigning groups, as it would enable a greater transfer of knowledge, resources and ultimately contribute to raising the issue at a national level. In the longer term, I aim to make use of my results to contribute to strengthening links between individual local groups in England, through a website with information on how to react to the discovery of a child's situation, providing at the same time the opportunity for local campaigners to exchange ideas, questions and advice on a mailing list. As I argue in Chapter 5, local campaigners would have particularly welcomed more information on how other schools organised against the deportation of a child. Such a website would enable school actors newly involved in fighting against a child's deportation to access information on the issue. Furthermore,

it would enable teachers and other actors interested in the issue to learn proactively about family detention and removal before being actually confronted with a situation themselves.

As far as policy-makers are concerned, this thesis has highlighted the potential for empathetic feelings towards migrant families, and potentially other groups of migrants, within society. It has also shown how shocked and outraged French and English civil-society actors were upon discovering the way migrants were treated in parallel to a mainstream justice system otherwise seen as relatively *faire* by interviewees. This suggests that there is the potential within the population for compassion towards migrants, and that a more sensitive immigration regime may be supported were these sympathies to be mobilised.

9.6 Towards further research

This research has highlighted many issues that call for further investigation in the area or related fields.

One area of additional study would be to undertake research with families and young people threatened with deportation to give them a voice that unfortunately remains absent from this thesis. It was by no means my aim to 'disempower' 'non-status' families. In my opinion, research in this field is important and they have the potential to complement each other. Interviewees all referred to the transformed relationship with 'non-status' families resulting from ongoing interactions. It would therefore be interesting

to consider young people and families' opinions on their relationships with their 'supporters'. It would furthermore be worth investigating the extent to which such support actions have an impact on 'non-status' migrants' lives, acting, for instance, as de facto integration programmes potentially more successful than those set up by the state for migrants with leave to remain.

Another area for additional study would be to look more closely at the impact of such mobilisations on policy-making. I infer from policy data – regarding in particular the family 'amnesty' in England and the exceptional regularisation in France, as well as other 'back-door' regularisations – that such mobilisations did have an impact on policy-making. It was furthermore acknowledged as such by the British Home Secretary in 2003 and the French Interior Minister in 2006. However, more in-depth analysis is required to shed light on the outcomes and consequences of social mobilisations on policy-making. Similarly, as mentioned in Chapter 8, French interviewees suggested that RESF-led mobilisations in support of undocumented children paved the way for wider mobilisations in support of irregular migrant workers. Further research is needed to investigate the extent to which social mobilisations in support of 'non-status' children helped to open up avenues for broader mobilisations.

This thesis considers children's activities as social movement actors principally through the prism of adults' opinions. It would therefore be worth undertaking further research with children and young people themselves involved in campaigning against the deportation of a friend. Focus group discussions together with participatory methods would be particularly suited

to look into the dynamics of mobilisations among CYP and look further into the notion of CYP as particularly powerful collective actors.

Finally, it would be particularly worthwhile to look into such mobilisations in other Western countries. It seems especially relevant to the United States, for instance, where many 'non-status' parents of US-born children are threatened with deportation, as well as Belgium, Canada or Germany, which have also experienced numerous grassroots mobilisations. Such research on mobilisations in other countries would provide the opportunity to further investigate the role of the child, as a social actor, and childhood, as a concept, on collective action. It would furthermore provide the opportunity to look into similarities and differences regarding social mobilisations in support of 'non-status' children in these different countries. This could ultimately contribute to validating or refuting the conjectures previously discussed.

Appendix One: Statistics on removals of asylum dependants

	Number of asylum dependants under 18 removed	Total number of asylum cases removed (including dependants)	Ratio (%)
2002	2,230	13,910	16
2003	3,435	17,895	19.2
2004	1,700	14,915	11.4
2005	1,420	15,685	9.1
2006	1,460	18,280	8
2007	800	13,705	5.8
2008	625	12,875	4.9

Source: Freedom of Information Request 11480

	Applicants granted leave to remain under the Family ILR exercise (excluding dependants)	Applicants granted leave to remain under the Family ILR exercise (including dependants)	Number of dependants granted leave to remain
2004	9,235	35,855	26,620
2005	11,245	34,235	22,990
2006	4,115	12,685	8,570
2007	220	unknown	unknown
Total	24,815		Up to 2006: 58,180

Sources: (Bennett et al., 2007; Home Office, 2009)

In France, statistics are considerably more scarce than in Britain. However, recently published data sheds more light on ad-hoc regularisations presided upon by individual prefects.

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Personal and family links (main applicant)	13,724	14,542	22,759	17,463	15,473

Sources: (Secrétariat Général du Comité Interministériel de Contrôle de l'Immigration, 2009: 51)

Signatories of the Contrat d'Accueil et d'Intégration (Reception and Integration Contract), including applicants with a one-year renewable leave to remain (2008):

Catégories	Hommes	Femmes	Total
VIE PRIVÉE ET FAMILIALE			
Mineur < = 18 ans résidence habituelle depuis l'âge de 13 ans (article L. 313-11-2°)	1 404	1 321	2 725
Conjoint de Français (article L. 313-11-4°)	14 884	19 230	34 114
Conjoint de scientifique (article L. 313-11-5°)	45	242	287
Parent d'enfant français mineur résidant en France (article L. 313-11-6°)	5 158	4 992	10 150
Liens personnels et familiaux (article L. 313-11-7°)	7 345	7 478	14 823
Né en France, résidence pendant huit ans dont scolarité pendant cinq ans (article L. 313-11-8°)	41	38	79
Rente > = 20 % (article L. 313-11-9°)	12	7	19
Apatride ou conjoint ou enfant < = 18 ans (article L. 313-11-10°)	54	56	110
Protection subsidiaire ou conjoint ou enfant < = 18 ans (article L. 313-13)	242	277	519
Considérations humanitaires (article L. 313-14)	951	484	1 435
Total	30 136	34 125	64 261

Source: (Secrétariat Général du Comité Interministériel de Contrôle de l'Immigration, 2009: 162)

Appendix Two: Keyword search for the political claims-making analysis undertaken in Chapter 4

A general keyword search first provided me with a large number of articles. While coding these articles, I selected new keywords based on their occurrences in articles (such as Section 9 in England or Réseau Education sans Frontières in France) and then undertook a more refined keyword search:

Keywords for the search on Lexis Nexis – British newspapers: Child* AND removal (AND asylum), Deportation AND child* (AND asylum), Section 9 AND asylum, Campaign AND child* AND deportation OR removal, Support AND child* AND asylum.

Keywords for the search on Lexis Nexis – French newspapers: enfant AND sans papiers AND (expulsion OR regularisation), mobilisation AND enfant AND (expulsion OR regularisation), soutien AND enfant AND (expulsion OR regularisation), Réseau Education sans Frontières or RESF

Appendix Three: Tables of interviewees

Interviews conducted in France

Interview number	Age category	Gender	Occupation	Career path as an activist
1	60-69	Male	Teacher	Long-time activist
2	50-59	Female	School librarian	Interest in activism
3	40-49	Female	Assistant filmmaker	Discovery of activism
4	40-49	Female	Theatre producer	Previous involvement in activism
5	50-59	Male	Civil-servant	Long-time activism
6	50-59	Female	Teacher	Previous involvement in activism
7	50-59	Female	Architect	Long-time activist
8	30-39	Female	Journalist	Interest in activism
9	30-39	Male	Civil-servant (tax controller)	Long-time activist
10	30-39	Female	Artistic painter	Discovery of activism
11	60-69	Male	Retired teacher	Long-time activist

12	60-69	Male	Teacher	Long-time activist
13	70-79	Male	Retired professor	Long-time activist
14	60-69	Male	Retired teacher	Long-time activist
15	30-39	Male	Consultant	Discovery of activism
16	20-29	Male	Student	Discovery of activism
17	50-59	Female	Teacher	Interest in activism
18	50-59	Male	Teacher	Long-time activist
19	50-59	Female	Teacher	Long-time activist
20	40-49	Female	Teacher	Interest in activism
21	20-29	Female	Teacher	Discovery of activism
22	30-39	Female	Teacher	Interest in activism
23	30-39	Male	Teacher	Long-time activist (unionist)
24	10-19	Group of five undocumented young people	School pupils	Discovery of activism
25	50-59	Male	Retired teacher	Long-time activist
26	10-19	Male	Student	Discovery of

				activism
27	30-39	Female	School librarian	Interest in activism
28	40-49	Female	Teacher	Discovery of activism
29	10-19	Female	School pupil	Discovery of activism
30	20-29	Female	Teacher	Interest in activism
31	30-39	Female	Mayor	Long-time politician
32	30-39	Female	Teacher	Previous involvement in activism
33	40-49	Male	Teacher	Long-time activist
34	60-69	Male	Local councillor	Involved in party politics
35	20-29	Female	Teacher	Long-time activist

Interviews conducted in England

Interview number	Age category	Gender	Occupation	Career path as an activist
1	40-49	Female	Teacher	Discovery of activism
2	50-59	Male	Headteacher	Discovery of activism
3	50-59	Female	Deputy Headteacher	Previous interest in activism
4	60-69	Female	Retired teacher	Previous interest in activism
5	50-59	Female	Teacher	Long-time activist
6	60-69	Male	Headteacher	Unionist
7	60-69	Male	Member of Parliament	Long-time politician
8	30-39	Female	Policy advisor in a Refugee organisation	N/A
9	20-29	Female	Policy advisor in a Children's organisation	Involved in party politics
10	20-29	Female	Development officer in a children's	N/A

			organisation	
11	30-39	Male	Researcher in a research and campaigning institute	Long-time activist
12	40-49	Male	Consultant on refugee education	Long-time activist
13	40-49	Male	Headteacher	Discovery of activism
14	50-59	Female	Headteacher	Discovery of activism
15	30-39	Female	Teacher	Previous interest in activism
16	60-69	Male	Retired Manager in a private company	Involved in party politics
17	40-49	Female	Nurse	Discovery of activism
18	60-69	Female	Retired social worker	Long-time activist
19	30-39	Male	Teacher	Long-time activist
20	60-69	Male	Retired teacher	Long-time activist
21	40-49	Male	Priest	Discovery of activism
22	40-49	Female	School chaplain	Discovery of

				activism
23	40-49	Female	Assistant research officer in the Police	Involved in party politics
24	10-19	Female	School pupil	Discovery of activism
25	20-29	Female	Teacher	Discovery of activism
26	20-29	Female	Teacher	Discovery of activism
27	30-39	Female	Teacher	Discovery of activism
28	30-39	Female	Teacher	Unionist (NUT)
29	40-49	Female	Ex-teacher	Long-time activist
30	30-39	Female	Social worker	Long-time activist

Appendix Four: Topic guide

Recruitment/entry into mobilisation

When and how it started for the person, what was the situation at stake?

Set up of the campaign;

who did you contact to gather information on campaigning? Contact with and support by other actors involved in similar campaigns

How did you publicise the case and the campaign within the school and in the area?

Individual involvement

Role within the campaign (what does it consist of), evolution of this role over time

Number of families supported

Amount of time dedicated to the actions

Outcome of the mobilisations, influence on the motivation to continue

Motivations, objectives and objects of the involvement

Primary reasons for getting involved

Definition of the issue at stake; Evolution with regard to own opinion on the issue?

Particular event(s) leading to involvement

Impact of the issue of childhood

Reasons/events likely to lead to reconsideration of involvement

What have you gained personally from these experiences?

Collective action

Number of actors involved, leader(s) within the movement

Positioning of the school staff, pupils' parents, local politicians, religious communities

Consensus and divergences among the mobilised actors

Benefits of the campaign

The asylum-seeking families

Involvement of the families within the campaign

Reaction of the families to the campaign and to the publicising of their case

Room for action of the families (hunger strike, building occupation) and impact on mobilisation

Reactions

Reactions of family, friends and acquaintances

Reactions of pupils within the school

Were there people opposing the campaign and how did you react to it?

Past involvements

Involvement in NGOs, unions, political parties or groups

Interest in social and political issues; Interest in migration issues

Awareness about and interest in other similar mobilisations in Britain

Evolution in the personal opinion on migration issues

Opinion on what the Government should do

Background on the person

Duration of presence of the person in the area

Family situation

Profession

Age

Religion

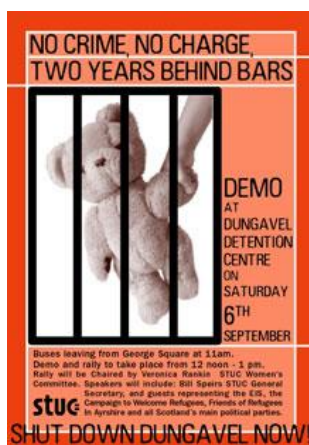
Appendix Five: Campaign banners in France and England



“Let them stay here” - Réseau Education Sans Frontières 2007 - France



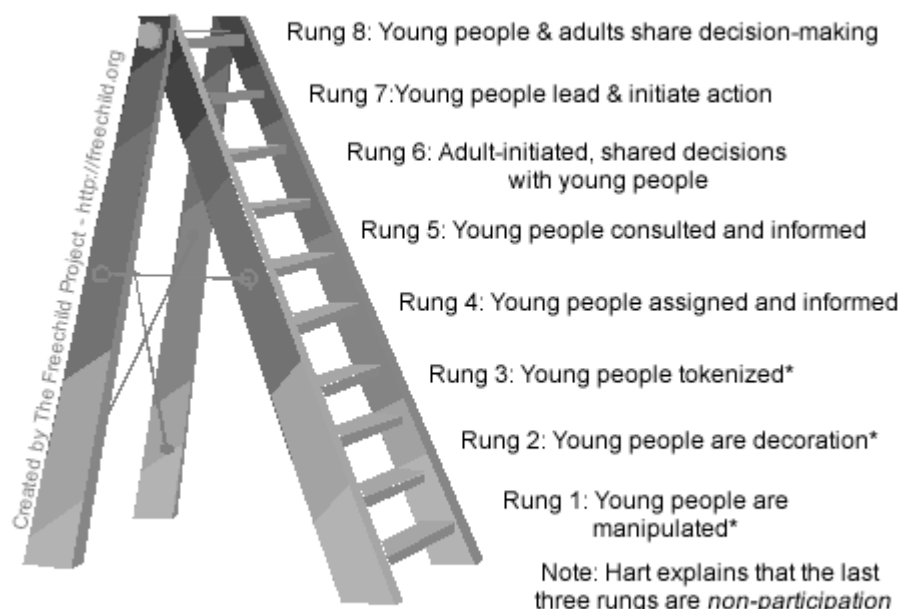
No place for a Child Campaign – Save the Children and Refugee Council - Britain



Close Dungavel Now Campaign - Britain

Appendix Six: Hart's ladder of participation

Roger Hart's Ladder of Young People's Participation



Adapted from Hart, R. (1992). *Children's Participation from Tokenism to Citizenship*. Florence: UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre.

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